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# CROMWELL'S POLICY IN ITS ECONOMIC ASPECTS

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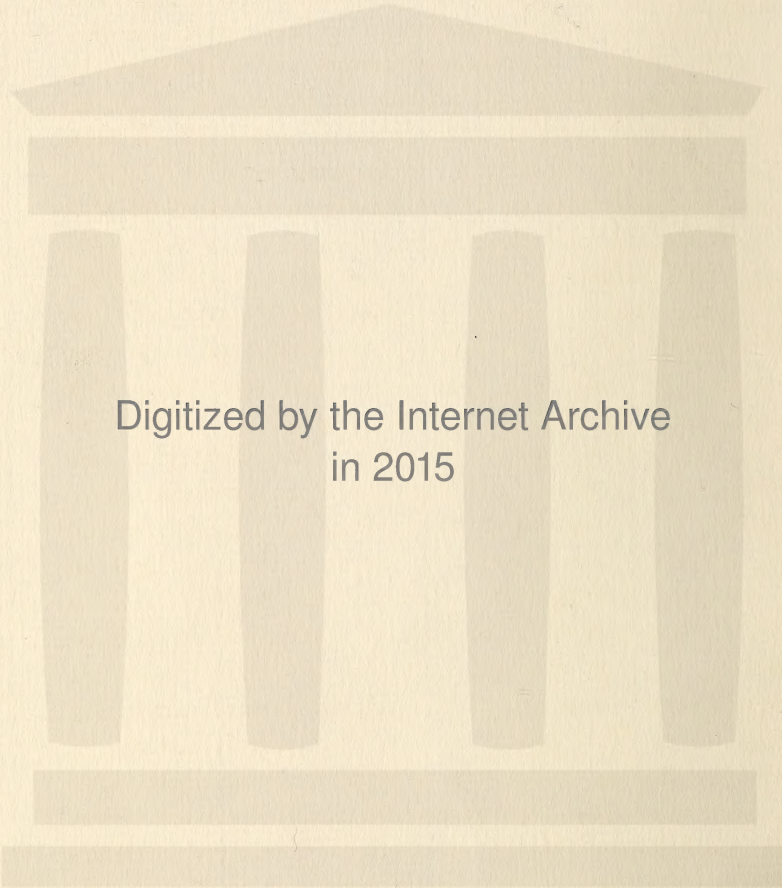
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## CROMWELL'S POLICY IN ITS ECONOMIC ASPECTS

A BRILLIANT, though at times an erratic, writer<sup>1</sup> has compared human society to a complete living organism, having circulation, heart and members. "The heart," he says, "lies at the seat of international commercial exchanges, the circulation flows through the arteries of trade, and the members usually show more or less vitality in proportion to their direct relations with the heart." It is possible, without accepting the biological view of social development, to admit that the above metaphorical description is, in effect, a very vivid picture of the history of world trade and the highways thereof.

By far the most important of world-trade routes, from time immemorial up to the discovery of America, has been that connecting the East with the West—the route that ever since the days of Homer and Solomon has given the West its ivory, spices, silk and precious stones. The history of this commerce between Orient and Occident<sup>2</sup> is, to a certain extent, an epitome of the history of Egypt, Judaea, Babylon, Greece, Persia, Carthage and Rome. It throws a flood of light on many important events of the ancient world and is in itself a proof of the essential unity of history. When we study these commercial relations, it is not surprising to find that each one of these states, in her period of greatest political power, has had control of the Eastern trade. Not that it should be inferred that control of the Asiatic trade route was in all cases the source of political greatness: in some instances it was only a manifestation thereof, for at times it was only through political power that a state was able to get control of this commerce. In all cases economic and political causes reacted

<sup>1</sup> Brooks Adams, *Economic Supremacy of America*, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> For a remarkable summary of these commercial relations, see Sir William Wilson Hunter, *History of British India*, vol. i, ch. i.

one upon the other ; in no instance can one set of causes be considered fundamental.

After the fall of Rome in the West, Asiatic trade came under the control of two Eastern states, that founded by Mohammed and the Byzantine Empire. It gave a peculiar note to that civilization with which we are acquainted in the *Arabian Nights*, and it preserved in the Empire of Constantine Porphyrogenitus the art, learning and laws of old Rome.<sup>1</sup> The peoples who were subsequently to constitute England, France, Germany and Italy had practically no commercial relations with the East until the Crusades. But these great religious and emotional expeditions, by a most natural transition, gradually changed their character and became commercial. Instead of setting out to seize the Holy Land from the grasp of the infidel, Venice, as leader of the Crusade in the opening years of the thirteenth century, planned successfully to capture that Asiatic trade route controlled from Constantinople. The stimulus which Europe received from contact with the East during the Crusades had incalculable consequences. Europe, thus brought into touch with a much higher civilization, experienced new economic wants ; and these the merchants of the Italian city-states, being on the trade route between East and West, could of all merchants most conveniently satisfy. The centuries following the Crusades mark the power and wealth of Venice, Pisa, Genoa and Florence. From Italy the Eastern products were sent north to the Hanseatic cities of lower Germany, whence they were distributed to other countries ; and all the states and cities on this trade route between the East and the West were at the highest point of their economic prosperity. This condition lasted until the rise of the Ottoman power in the fifteenth century, when the Turks not only captured Constantinople but also developed a formidable navy and made themselves masters of the Mediterranean. No important commercial relations between Turk and Christian were possible.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Frederic Harrison, *Byzantine History in the Early Middle Ages*, p. 33. On this trade under Justinian, see Cunningham, *Western Civilization: Ancient Times*, pp. 201-202.



For a time Europe was to all intents and purposes cut off from the Eastern trade.

The dissatisfaction with this state of affairs and the imperative demand for a renewal of commercial intercourse with the East led to that period of intense scientific and exploring activity which culminated in the discoveries of Vasco da Gama and of Columbus. Almost simultaneously a new trade route to the East was thrown open and a new world was given to Europe for economic exploitation. To the commerce with the East was added the wealth of America. The consequences were revolutionary. The old trade routes were abandoned and the prosperity of the Italian and South German cities was a thing of the past. The future belonged not to the Mediterranean cities, but to those on or near the Atlantic seaboard. Spain and Portugal, to whom the credit of these two great discoveries is due, naturally profited first thereby. In this these states were aided not only by prior discovery, but also by the bull of demarcation issued by Alexander VI; for it must not be lost sight of that this document, which divided the entire unexplored and pagan world between Spain and Portugal, constituted an unquestionable title which no other nation at that time would dare to challenge.<sup>1</sup> Spain and Portugal enjoyed their monopoly for a time, but it was inevitable that other nations should fret under the restraint of the papal bull, and should seek a share of the wealth flowing into the states of the Iberian peninsula. In fact, opposition to the monopoly conferred by the Popes on Spain and Portugal was unquestionably one of the elements of that complicated movement of revolt against Rome called the Reformation. France, because of her religious wars, was in no position to enter the field as a competitor. The same holds true for Germany; for not only did the religious wars ravage this country, but in addition the absolute decentralization of the state would in itself have prevented any vigorous commercial and colonial policy.<sup>2</sup> With the French and Germans out of the contest, Portugal's power

<sup>1</sup> Henry Harrisse, *Diplomatic History of America*, p. 40 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Ehrenberg, *Hamburg und England in Zeitalter der Königin Elisabeth*, p. 39.

in the East and Spain's power in the West were to be laid low by the Dutch and the English.

At one time, toward the end of Elizabeth's reign, after the destruction of the Armada, it seemed as if England would profit most by the declining power of Spain and of Portugal. The English nation was a vast storehouse of energy and was eager for the contest. But the accession of the Stuarts, with the ensuing conflict between *jure-divino* Anglicanism and parliamentary Puritanism, changed the aspect of affairs. The nation's energy was consumed in the home conflict, and the supremacy in foreign commerce, lost by Spain and Portugal, was won for the time by the United Provinces. The northern provinces of the Netherlands, which had revolted against Spain's religious despotism, became during the course of two generations the economic masters of Europe. The economic history of the United Provinces during the first half of the seventeenth century is merely the record of unchecked progress in the acquisition of wealth and colonies, such as can be found in the history of England during the decades following the Napoleonic Era.

It was due to a curious coincidence that most of the colonies acquired by the Dutch during these years were gained at the expense of the Portuguese. When, in 1580, Portugal was annexed by Spain, the Dutch were in the midst of their revolt against the latter country. Hitherto, the spices of the East had come to Lisbon, whence the Dutch were accustomed to distribute them to Europe. This profitable trade of the Dutch as middlemen was one of their main supports in the movement against Spain, and the annexation of Portugal was a severe blow to their cause. Being cut off from their profits as distributors, they sought the trade at its fountain-head and stripped Portugal of her richest possessions in the East. Portugal was driven out of the Spice Islands and the Dutch acquired a monopoly of this trade. In the Western hemisphere also, as well as in the East, the United Provinces profited at the expense of Portugal, and Brazil during these years became a Dutch possession.



This colonial expansion was not the only source of wealth the Dutch had. The manufactures, such as cloth and linen, for which even during the Middle Ages the Netherlands were noted, gave employment, it is said, to 600,000 people;<sup>1</sup> the fisheries were a source of great wealth to the people and to the government; the Baltic trade, which at that time was more important in volume<sup>2</sup> and hardly less lucrative than the Eastern trade, was practically controlled by the Dutch; and, finally, they became, through the enormous development of their mercantile marine, the carriers of the world. According to Sir Walter Raleigh, "the Low Countries had as many Ships and Vessels as eleven Kingdoms of Christendom had."<sup>3</sup> A vast accumulation of capital, better banking and commercial facilities and methods, and, as a consequence, a low interest rate,<sup>4</sup> gave to the Dutch the economic mastery of Europe and an advantage of position which the other nations of Europe found extremely difficult to overcome.

The success of the Dutch was due, in the main, to the fact that the movement was a national one. The merchants could rely on the support of their government. The failure of England to realize the promise of the Elizabethan era was in the same degree due to the non-national dynastic policy of the first two Stuart kings. No stronger contrast is possible than that between the policy of England and that of the United Provinces during the first half of the seventeenth century. At every stage in this period of English colonial and commercial history we can trace the influence of the Spanish marriage project, of the fortunes of James's son-in-law, the Elector-Palatine, and particularly of the influence of the need of the Stuarts for money to free themselves from the fetters of parliamentary

<sup>1</sup> A. Lefèvre-Pontalis, *John de Witt*, vol. i, p. 9; cf. Pringsheim, *Beiträge zur wirtschaftlichen Entwicklungsgeschichte der Vereinigten Niederlande im 17ten und 18ten Jahrhundert*, in *Schmoller's Forschungen*, vol. x, iii, pp. 1-3.

<sup>2</sup> Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, vol. iii, p. 430.

<sup>3</sup> *Works of Sir Walter Raleigh* (London, 1751), vol. ii, p. 123.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Josiah Child, *A New Discourse of Trade* (London, 1694), pp. 195-196; J. de Witt, *True Interest and Political Maxims of the Republic of Holland* (London, 1746), p. 285.

government. This financial distress of the first two Stuart kings was in itself to a great extent due to the discovery of America and the influx of silver thence into Europe. The rise of prices which was caused by this influx made the royal income, which was fixed, hopelessly inadequate and was an important factor in causing the conflict between crown and Parliament.<sup>1</sup>

The English East India Company, a weakling in comparison with its Dutch rival, which had the nation and the government at its back, had early entered the field to get a share of the Eastern trade. The capture of Ormuz in 1622, following England's victories on the Indian coast from 1612 on, left India and the Persian Gulf open to England so far as Portugal was concerned.<sup>2</sup> The most lucrative trade, however, was not with India proper, but with Sumatra, Java and the Spice Islands of the far East; and, despite numerous efforts, the English were never able to get a firm footing there. The tragedy at Amboyna, in 1623, even for those days an exceptionally barbarous act, by which a number of Englishmen were judicially murdered, definitely preserved to the Dutch the monopoly of the enormously profitable spice trade. The English merchants had henceforth to devote their efforts to India proper, and even there their position was a precarious one, owing to Dutch opposition.<sup>3</sup> The beginnings of England's Asiatic Empire were not auspicious, mainly because the company could not rely upon the support of the government. Its interests were sacrificed to the dynastic aims of James I and to the fiscal needs of Charles I. Despite certain half-hearted efforts on the part of the Stuarts, the Dutch made absolutely no reparation for the murder at Amboyna. Charles's great desire was to create so large an income for the crown that he might "live of his own" and free himself from the necessity of summoning Parliament. His ideal in government was the absolute monarchy

<sup>1</sup> Cunningham, *English Industry and Commerce: Modern Times* (1892), vol. ii, p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> Hunter, *India*, vol. i, pp. 329-330.

<sup>3</sup> Bruce, *Annals of the Honorable East India Co.*, vol. i, pp. 445-446; cf. also Thurloe, *State Papers*, vol. i, pp. 573-574.



of the continent; and, as he knew that the sovereigns of the houses of Aviz and Hapsburg had personally drawn large profits from the East India trade, he sought to do likewise. Instead of fostering the Eastern trade, Charles I's efforts, especially in the non-parliamentary years preceding the rebellion, were devoted to extorting money from the East India Company.<sup>1</sup>

The same influences are visible in the purely colonial policy of the Stuarts, in the early history of the New England and Southern colonies. Everything was subservient to the Spanish marriage,<sup>2</sup> to the fortune of the Winter King and to the financial needs of the crown. The fate of Sir Walter Raleigh, the unfortunate survivor of a more heroic and national age, is typical of the sacrifice of colonial interests to dynastic policy.<sup>3</sup> Then in 1632 all places in Canada and Nova Scotia which had been settled by the English were by the treaty of St. Germain restored to France.<sup>4</sup> Charles's reason for doing so, as we learn from a letter to the English ambassador in Paris, was his pressing need of money and his hope of receiving, in return for the cession, the Queen's dowry, which had not yet been paid.<sup>5</sup> The same desire for money influenced the Stuart policy toward Virginia. It found expression especially in the desire of the Stuarts to make a royal monopoly of Virginia tobacco.<sup>6</sup>

Whatever progress was made in English colonization under Charles I and James I was due to private initiative, and was accomplished in spite of the action of the government. What would have been achieved, had the English companies and merchants felt sure of the support of the government, can be seen by what the Dutch did in these years. The settlements made by the English were comparatively unimportant and for the most part occupied regions which were the leavings of other

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hunter, vol. ii, pp. 30-31.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Brown, *Genesis of the United States*, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Stebbing, *Sir Walter Raleigh*, pp. 332, 333.

<sup>4</sup> Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, vol. vi, part i, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Hugh Edward Egerton, *A Short History of British Colonial Policy*, p. 50.

<sup>6</sup> Beer, *Commercial Policy of England towards the American Colonies*, pp. 22-27.

nations — of Spain and the United Provinces. This cannot be sufficiently emphasized. According to the orthodox political economy of the day, which measured a country's wealth by its store of precious metals and its prosperity by the excess of merchandise exports over imports, the Spanish and Dutch had carried off all the valuable colonies. It was argued that the flow of silver from the Spanish colonies to the mother-country brought wealth to Spain. At the same time, it was clearly seen that the spices, which the Dutch sold at enormous profits to all Europe, brought a large influx of gold and silver into the United Provinces. The mercantilists recognized that, on a smaller scale, Virginia and Barbadoes were in this way of benefit to England, on account of their tobacco and sugar, respectively. But no economist of the day could see any advantage to England from the Northern colonies; for they produced the same commodities as England, and thus competed with the home product. They were considered a source of weakness, rather than of strength — in which fact we can find the explanation for the unpopularity of the New England colonies among English publicists of the day. For like reasons, the East India trade was very unpopular in England, since it rendered necessary the exportation of silver. Had the East India trade been as profitable as the Dutch trade with the Spice Islands, the orthodox economist of the day would easily have seen the benefits thereof.<sup>1</sup> Though the English settlements in India and in America bore in them the seeds of the greatest empire the world has seen, to the mind of the day they were unimportant — merely the leavings of more energetic states. This was due to the conflict between the nation and the Stuart dynasty. The Stuarts lacked both a serious and intelligent interest in the development of the nation's trade and also a well defined and strenuous commercial policy. Not only did they allow the navy to decline<sup>2</sup> — and naval power was in that

<sup>1</sup> On the immense dividends paid by the Dutch East India Company, cf. Morris, *The History of Colonization*, vol. i, p. 317 n.

<sup>2</sup> M. Oppenheim, "The Royal Navy under James I" and "The Royal Navy under Charles I," *English Historical Review*, VII, 495; VIII, 472.



age of armed trade an absolute prerequisite to successful foreign commerce — but they also subordinated everything to the interests of their dynasty.

*I. Conflict with the Dutch; The Navigation Acts of 1650 and 1651.*

The establishment of the Commonwealth in England, after the execution of Charles I, gave the nation the quiet necessary for the successful exploitation of its economic and commercial resources. Seeley<sup>1</sup> records the great change in foreign policy which followed the fall of Charles I. Correspondingly, a marked change is apparent in the attitude of the government toward colonization and commerce. A German historian has noted that this was the result of a general tendency, which appears in all revolutions, to tame the inflamed passions by increased material efforts.<sup>2</sup> Whether this be so or not, a revival of colonial and commercial expansion was inevitable. The movement toward expansion had existed in the day of Elizabeth, and had been only temporarily checked by the politico-religious conflict in the two succeeding reigns. It was inevitable that this movement would go on, and at a much accelerated pace, when the nation's energy, which had been dammed up by the internal conflict, should again have free play. The nation's resources, its industry and commerce, had not been so seriously crippled by the Civil War as would be imagined.<sup>3</sup> There was a feeling of confidence everywhere and an energy which nothing could withstand. And on every side the English saw the Dutch in possession of the most valuable trade.

From the waters in and around England, Dutch fishermen brought wealth to their country.<sup>4</sup> The contemporary estimate,

<sup>1</sup> Growth of British Policy, vol. ii, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Mayr, in Helmolt, Weltgeschichte, Bd. vii, part i, p. 99. "Die Tyranie oder der Caesarismus — als solchen darf man Cromwell's Protektorat bezeichnen — hat immer das Streben, die noch von den Nachschwingungen der Revolution erzitternden Leidenschaften durch Ablenkung auf die wirtschaftlichen Interessen zu beschwichtigen." <sup>3</sup> Cf. J. E. Symes, Social England, vol. iv, p. 270.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. S. R. Gardiner, Commonwealth and Protectorate, vol. ii, pp. 80-81.

that 6400 vessels and 168,000 men were employed by the Dutch in the fisheries, that the public revenue derived therefrom was nearly one million pounds, and that the private revenue was ten times as large as this,<sup>1</sup> is an exaggeration.<sup>2</sup> Still, the fisheries were unquestionably a most important Dutch industry; and what especially galled Englishmen was the fact that the resulting wealth was derived, to a great extent, from fishing in what they claimed were English waters.<sup>3</sup> The question of the Dutch fisheries — especially the herring fisheries — and the question of England's dominion of the waters surrounding her<sup>4</sup> were inextricably intertwined. From mediæval times England had claimed that her territorial sovereignty extended over the adjacent waters, that subjects of no other government could fish therein without her license and that her sovereignty should be recognized by a salute to the English flag whenever one of her men-of-war met a foreign vessel in these waters. This claim to the sovereignty of the sea was antiquated, and must needs fall away with the course of events. It had led to that famous controversy between the most renowned of English lawyers, Selden, and the most philosophical jurist of his age, Grotius. Selden in this controversy represented the spirit of reaction; Grotius, the spirit of progress. But the reactionary policy fell in with the interests of England. The opposing views are well represented by a conversation between Bulstrode Whitelocke and the skipper of a Dutch fishing smack, who had been taken prisoner by the ship which was carrying Whitelocke on his famous embassy to Sweden.<sup>5</sup>

Whitelocke: What right have you to fish in these seas?

Skipper: I thought anyone might fish in the broad sea.

Whitelocke: Not without leave of those who have the dominion of those seas.

<sup>1</sup> B. Whitelocke, *Journal of the Swedish Embassy*, vol. i, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> Geddes, John de Witt (American edition), p. 199 n.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Whitelocke, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-153.

<sup>4</sup> Mahan, in *The Influence of the Sea Power*, p. 59, gives a characteristic incident of the enforcement of this claim under James I.

<sup>5</sup> Whitelocke, *op. cit.*, p. 114.



Skipper : I know not who have the dominion of the sea but they that have the best fleet.

Whitelocke : Indeed, a good fleet is the best argument for the dominion of seas : but though you never asked leave to fish on the seas of our Commonwealth, your predecessors have asked leave to fish here.

England based her claim on ancient privilege ; for it could be proven, as Sir Ralphe Maddison said, that the "Sovereignty of the British seas . . . by antient Records . . . belonged to the Sovereign of this Land."<sup>1</sup> It was considered "to the shame and wonderfull dishonour of England" that the herring fisheries in the waters adjacent to England were controlled by the Dutch.<sup>2</sup> The pamphlet literature on this subject is large, and every writer on commerce urged England to drive the Dutch from these fisheries. The very growth of the fisheries was a proof that England had not been able to enforce her claim to this monopoly ; in fact, no serious attempt was made to do so, though occasionally an English man-of-war surprised the Dutch fishing fleet and exacted a small license-fee.<sup>3</sup>

The supreme importance of developing the English fisheries was urged on other grounds. It was clearly perceived that the existence of a large fishing fleet would be a source of strength to the nation, as the navy could rely upon the fishermen to furnish sailors to command and to man its vessels.<sup>4</sup> For England understood well enough that "antient Records" were not

<sup>1</sup> Sir Ralphe Maddison, *Great Britain's Remembrancer* (London, 1655), pp. 39-40. This book was presented to Cromwell and to Parliament.

<sup>2</sup> Lewes Roberts, "The Treasure of Traffike" (London, 1641), p. 89 ; in *Select Collection of Early English Tracts on Commerce*.

<sup>3</sup> *Cf.*, for an instance of this in 1636, Gardiner, *History of England, 1603-1642*, vol. viii, p. 157. It was reported that in 1651 an English man-of-war, meeting the Dutch fishermen, demanded every tenth herring as an acknowledgment of England's sovereignty of the seas. But others said that the Dutchmen were only ordered to strike sail as a salute. See Whitelocke's *Memorials* (London, 1682), p. 487.

<sup>4</sup> Tobias Gentleman, "England's Way to Win Wealth and to Employ Ships and Mariners" (London, 1614), *Harleian Miscellany*, vol. iii, p. 248 ; "Trade's Increase," by J. R. (London, 1615), *Ibid.*, p. 305 ; Sir Thomas Roe's Speech in Parliament, 1641, on "Cause of Decay of Coin and Trade in England," *Ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 459 ; Thomas Ratcliff, "The Royal Fishing Revived" (London, 1670), *Ibid.*, vol. vii, p. 403.

enough to drive the Dutch from their lucrative fisheries, and that the development of the English sea power was a more potent argument. Whitelocke was practically forced to admit this in his argument with the Dutch skipper. Then, as now, and perhaps even more clearly then, it was seen that a nation's sea power depended ultimately on the size of its mercantile marine, whether it should consist of fishing smacks or carrying vessels.

By the force of circumstances, through the shifting of the scene of the Civil War from the land to the sea, the Commonwealth had perforce to devote its attention to the development of the navy. The creation of a great navy, hardly second in efficiency to the "New Model" army of Cromwell, is generally admitted to have been the work of Vane.<sup>1</sup> With this navy in existence, the temper of the nation, in the respite from civil war, rendered it inevitable that the strength of the navy should be used in ousting the Dutch from their monopoly of the fisheries and from their carrying trade.

This carrying trade was a source of irritation even more serious than the fisheries. The Dutch were practically the universal carriers of the day. Their freight rates were much lower than those of the English,<sup>2</sup> and the result was that the English mercantile marine was not increasing.<sup>3</sup> It was especially humiliating to the English to find that the trade with their colonies in America was to a preponderating extent in the hands of the Dutch.<sup>4</sup> A writer upon whom we can place reliance tells us that before 1650 two Dutch ships to one English ship went to the Barbadoes.<sup>5</sup> It was asserted that the colonists of the island loved "to Trade more with the Dutch than with their countrymen."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There is no proof that it was designed, as Green has suggested, to counteract the political influence of the army. — *History of the English People*, vol. iii, p. 275.

<sup>2</sup> Works of Sir Walter Raleigh (London, 1751), vol. ii, p. 114; "Letters of John Bland," *Virginia Historical Magazine*, vol. i, no. 2, p. 148.

<sup>3</sup> Sheffield, *Commerce of the American States* (London, 1784), p. 136.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Ranke, *History of England in the Seventeenth Century*, vol. iii, p. 68.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Josiah Child, *A New Discourse of Trade* (London, 1694), p. 195.

<sup>6</sup> Whitelocke (*Memorials*, p. 607) quotes a letter of Penn; see also Thurloe, *State Papers*, vol. iii, p. 249.



Not only did the English meet with successful Dutch competition in the fisheries and in the carrying trade, but in all other fields they found the Dutch as strongly intrenched. The Baltic trade, as it was then generally called, consisted of the trade with Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Poland and Russia. From these countries there came, in addition to iron, copper and fur, the tar, pitch, hemp, masts and timber which the United Provinces needed for their shipping; and hence also came the food stuffs which were absolutely essential to an industrial nation. This trade was almost entirely in the hands of the Dutch. Yet, important as the Baltic trade was to the Dutch, it was hardly less so to the English. For, even though England did not depend upon it for her food supply, she did depend upon it for the naval stores which she herself could not produce. If England intended to keep her sea power at the point which it had reached during "the Civil War on the sea," if she intended to compete successfully with the Dutch fisheries and the Dutch carrying-trade, it was essential that she should have free access to those countries that produced naval stores. She could not afford to allow any country to have the slightest advantage over her in this trade. The "open door" was indispensable to her political and economic safety.

Access to the countries whence the tar, pitch, hemp and masts came ~~was~~ through the Sound, the narrow straits separating Denmark from the Scandinavian peninsula. As Denmark had in ~~her~~ possession, at the time of which we are writing, the provinces of Skaania and Blekingen on the Scandinavian side of the Sound, she absolutely controlled the entrance to the Baltic Sea. In 1649, Holland concluded with Denmark a treaty, by which it was provided that, in return for a lump sum paid annually to Denmark, Dutch vessels should have the right to go through the Sound without having to pay any tolls. And it was especially stipulated that Denmark should not grant a similar privilege to any other nation, but should maintain the existing high rates of toll.<sup>1</sup> The English government, clearly

*Dutch - Denmark  
Treaty 1649*

<sup>1</sup> Dumont, *Corps universel diplomatique*, vol. vi, part i, pp. 535-537. On this whole subject see James Geddes, *History of the Administration of John de Witt*

perceiving the advantage which the Dutch had gained by this Redemption Treaty, as it was called, protested through its ambassador, claiming that

the trade of this nation, through ye Sound into the Baltique Sea, is of very great concernment, both in respect of the usefullness of the commodities brought from thence, soe necessary, among other things, for building and rigging of shippes, which it is not convenient we should only receive or not, at the pleasure of other nations.<sup>1</sup>

This protest had no effect.

As far as the trade with the East Indies was concerned, it has already been mentioned that the English had been driven out of the Spice Islands and that they were confined to the less lucrative trade with the Indian peninsula proper. The tragedy of Amboyna, which marked the Dutch victory, was a still unavenged Majuba. "The spectres of the tortured victims stood between the two great Protestant powers during a century."<sup>2</sup> The arrogance of the Dutch and the high-handed manner in which they enforced their monopoly were continuous sources of annoyance to English merchants. In 1649 and several times in the two following years the English East India Company petitioned for help against Holland, alleging various sufferings during the preceding twenty years.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, on every side, England saw the Dutch in possession of the most lucrative trade. In order to change this situation and to place the trade with the colonies in English hands, Parliament passed the ordinance of October 3, 1650.<sup>4</sup> This act forbade the ships of any foreign nation from coming to or trading in any of the English colonies in America, "without License first had and obtained from the Parliament or Council of State."<sup>5</sup> In the following year, in order to encourage the

(English edition), pp. 168-169. This treaty was finally ratified only in 1651. Cf. also John Fiske, *Dutch and Quaker Colonies in America*, vol. i, p. 249.

<sup>1</sup> Geddes, *op. cit.*, pp. 176-177.

<sup>2</sup> Hunter, *India*, vol. i, p. 427.

<sup>3</sup> John Bruce, *Annals of the Honorable East India Co.*, vol. i, pp. 447-448, 458-460, 467.

<sup>4</sup> On this more in detail below; Scobell, vol. ii, pp. 132-134.

<sup>5</sup> Scobell, vol. ii, p. 133.



English carrying trade and fisheries, the well-known Navigation Act of October, 1651, was passed.<sup>1</sup> This provided that (1) no goods of the growth or manufacture of Asia, Africa or America should be imported into England or the dominions thereof, except in English-manned and English-owned ships; (2) no goods of the growth or manufacture of Europe should be imported into England or the dominions thereof, except in English ships and in such foreign ships as belonged to the country where the goods were produced and manufactured; (3) no goods of foreign growth or manufacture could be brought into England from any other place than the place of growth or production, or from those ports where alone the goods could be shipped or whence they were usually shipped after transportation; and (4) no salted fish and fish oil should be imported into England, except such as should be caught by English ships, and no salted fish should be exported except in English vessels.<sup>2</sup>

The Dutch ambassador tried to have these acts repealed,<sup>3</sup> as it was clearly seen that they were aimed against the United Provinces. But just as the Dutch government would not abandon the Redemption Treaty, so England manifested no disposition to comply with the Dutch request regarding the acts of 1650 and 1651.<sup>4</sup> Instead of repealing these acts, England set about enforcing them most vigorously, seizing many Dutch vessels found trading in violation of their provisions.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to these purely economic difficulties, which would inevitably bring about a war between the English and the

<sup>1</sup> Scobell, II, 176-177.

<sup>2</sup> In 1656 this provision was modified, making it lawful to export certain fish in foreign bottoms. See Scobell, II, 477.

<sup>3</sup> New York Colonial Documents, I, pp. 437, 486; Gardiner, Commonwealth and Protectorate, vol. ii, p. 107; Geddes, John de Witt (English edition), p. 194; Ludlow, Memoirs, vol. i, p. 299.

<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, see the paper found among the Clarendon State Papers and printed by Mr. Firth in *English Historical Review*, vol. viii, p. 531: "The war at first was sett on by those that were the procurers of the act prohibiting trade, which act was procured by some few men for ther interest; when it came to be known that the Dutch tooke it so ill, it was disputed hard whether it should be revoked."

<sup>5</sup> Thurloe, State Papers, vol. i, p. 187; Sainsbury, Calendar, 1584-1660, p. 364; Whitelocke, Memorials, pp. 495, 498.

*Navigation  
act.*

Dutch, there were other differences, some economic and others political, which tended to the same result. In questions of international law, the United Provinces were taking a position rendered necessary by their complex and advanced economic development. At that time there were no well-defined principles as to the rights of neutrals in times of war. The Dutch were in advance of their age when they contended that a neutral ship protects an enemy's goods, contraband of war excepted. England did not accept this view, and being practically at war, though nominally at peace, with France, she seized French goods on Dutch ships. It is true that the ships were in due time restored to their own owners by the courts, but these seizures constituted a real grievance, especially as no formal war existed between England and France.<sup>1</sup> As Mr. Gardiner well says: "It seems as if the English government, having ruined the Dutch trade with England by act of Parliament, had made up its mind to ruin the Dutch trade with France by action of its Court of Admiralty."<sup>2</sup>

Of purely political differences there were many. The Dutch people sympathized with the Stuart family, the relatives of their idolized house of Orange.<sup>3</sup> Then Dr. Dorislaus, the agent of Parliament, had been assassinated at The Hague by English and Scotch royalists,<sup>4</sup> and Parliament felt strong resentment because this "execrable murder"<sup>5</sup> was still unpunished. And, finally, the project, which had been presented to the Dutch government by Oliver St. John and Walter Strickland on behalf of England, of a more strict alliance and closer union between the two countries had been rejected.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See below more in detail.

<sup>2</sup> Gardiner, II, 108-109. Cf. also Letters and Papers Relating to the First Dutch War, 1652-1654 (Ed. by S. R. Gardiner), vol. i.

<sup>3</sup> Morley, Cromwell, p. 322; Seeley, Growth of British Policy, II, p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> The Memoirs of Edmund Ludlow (Ed. by Firth), II, 224-225; Geddes, 99-100, 108.

<sup>5</sup> Rymer, Foedera, XX, 596; Thurloe, I, 174. It was on behalf of this Dr. Dorislaus that Cromwell in 1648 wrote to the Master and Fellows of Trinity Hall, Cambridge. See Carlyle, Letters and Speeches of Cromwell (London, 1885), I, 357, Letter no. 86.

<sup>6</sup> Thurloe, I, 182-195; Rymer, XX, 600 *et seq.*; Gardiner, Commonwealth and Protectorate, I, 357 *et seq.*; Geddes, John de Witt, 163 *et seq.*; Gempachi

*Political  
difference*



If ever a war was inevitable, such was the case in that which broke out in 1652 between England and the United Provinces. A chance encounter between the two great admirals of the age, the Dutch Tromp and the English Blake, off the heights of Dover, brought to a focus an economic conflict which nothing but war or a coalescence of the two states could settle. To call this Dutch war "fratricidal and disastrous," to say that in its policy towards the Dutch Republic the English government "was running wild,"<sup>1</sup> is to ignore entirely the fact that England and the United Provinces were enemies by the very nature of things. If England was ever to redeem the promise of the Elizabethan Age, it must be, in the first place, at the expense of the Dutch, with whom, on nearly all sides of her economic development, she was bound to come into conflict. This rivalry was all the more accentuated by the economic doctrines then prevailing, according to which, to a certain extent, it was believed that what was one nation's gain in commerce was another nation's loss.

*Amerson edition*

During the course of the war, both Dutch and English sought to strengthen themselves by alliances with other powers. And as the war was solely a maritime war, the most advantageous alliance would most naturally be with Denmark, which, on account of her geographical position, controlled the European supply of naval stores. The Dutch were able to follow up the advantage which they had gained by the Redemption Treaty, and succeeded in concluding a treaty of alliance with Denmark in 1653. By this treaty Denmark was bound not only to forbid the passage of English war vessels through the Sound during the continuance of the war, but also to attack the English fleet.<sup>2</sup> In consequence of this treaty, Denmark detained twenty-two English ships and seized the goods therein.<sup>3</sup>

Mitzukuri, English-Niederländische Unionsbestrebungen im Zeitalter Cromwells; Seeley, Growth of British Policy, II, 20 *et seq.* In fact, Ludlow says (Memoirs, ed. by Firth, I, 267) that the failure of this negotiation was the "principal instrument to prevail with the Council of State to move Parliament to pass" the Navigation Act.

<sup>1</sup> Goldwin Smith, Three English Statesmen, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Dumont, vol. vi, pt. ii, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Ludlow, Memoirs, vol. i, pp. 324, 333.

In order to counteract this alliance, Bulstrode Whitelocke was sent on that embassy to the court of Queen Christina of Sweden, of which he has given us a most entertaining account.<sup>1</sup> He was instructed to do his utmost to counteract the Danish and Dutch alliance, and to get Sweden's aid in opening the Sound.<sup>2</sup> On his arrival in Sweden, Whitelocke devoted his efforts to the project of a joint attack on Denmark's forts on the Sound. But Sweden was not prepared for a war against Denmark and Holland, nor were her economic interests in harmony with those of England. Sweden favored the new doctrine of "free ships, free goods";<sup>3</sup> and the Queen asked Whitelocke "why the Baltic Sea was named as to free navigation and not other seas likewise," and if Cromwell "would consent to the freedom of navigation in America."<sup>4</sup> In a word, Sweden did not see why she should sacrifice blood and treasure to keep the Baltic open to commerce when, at the same time, England insisted on keeping as English monopolies not only the herring fisheries in the waters adjacent to England, but also all trade with the English colonies in America.<sup>5</sup> Thus Whitelocke's mission was a failure; he was unable to secure an alliance with Sweden, and had to be content with an unimportant commercial treaty,<sup>6</sup> concluded in 1654, just at the time that peace was about to be proclaimed between the English and the Dutch.

Notwithstanding the advantage which the Dutch had gained through this alliance with Denmark, the strain of war was more than the United Provinces could bear. In the naval war the Dutch were at an extreme disadvantage, being the more vulnerable in proportion as their mercantile marine was larger than that of England.<sup>7</sup> The consequence of the war was inevitably

<sup>1</sup> A Journal of the Swedish Embassy (Ed. by H. Reeve), 1855.

<sup>2</sup> Whitelocke, Journal, I, 89; *cf.* also I, p. 372.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 370.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 21; *cf.* also II, p. 30. Thurloe, State Papers, II, 157.

<sup>5</sup> Whitelocke, Journal, II, 50, 102.

<sup>6</sup> Dumont, vol. vi, pt. ii, pp. 74-77; Charles Jenkinson, A Collection of All the Treaties of Peace, vol. i, p. 69. The more important questions, such as trade to America and herring fisheries, were to be regulated in a special treaty.

<sup>7</sup> M. Oppenheim, "The Navy of the Commonwealth," *English Historical Review*, vol. xi, p. 20.



the stoppage of the carrying and fishing trades on which the Dutch depended. In the United Provinces all the signs of an acute financial and economic crisis were visible. Business in all branches was at a standstill. It was estimated that 1500 houses in Amsterdam were vacant;<sup>1</sup> and it is reported that one manufacturer of lace, who before the war had employed three to four hundred hands, had now only three people in his factory.<sup>2</sup> The economically advantageous position of England, more than the skill and valor of Blake and Monk, gave England the victory in this war.

Negotiations for peace were begun soon after the outbreak of hostilities. In 1653 Cromwell said to the Dutch peace commissioners that

the interests of both nations consisted in the welfare of commerce and navigation . . . The world was wide enough for both; if the two peoples could only thoroughly well understand each other, their countries would become the markets of the world.<sup>3</sup>

Somewhat later, a proposal was made indirectly by Cromwell, which shows clearly how well he understood that England's greatness must be based on colonial and commercial expansion. It was suggested that an offensive and defensive alliance be formed between the Dutch and English republics. To this alliance, Denmark, Sweden, the Protestant states of Germany and even France—provided the French Protestants should enjoy freedom of conscience—might be admitted. Especial privileges were to be granted to Dutch citizens in England and *vice versa*. For instance, Dutch citizens might even hold office in England, and English citizens likewise in the United Provinces. There were to be no commercial restrictions between the two countries, and the fisheries were to be free and open. As regards trade with the Indies in the East and in the West, a peculiar arrangement was proposed. All Asiatic trade was to be a Dutch monopoly; and, in addition,

<sup>1</sup> Geddes, John de Witt, p. 277; *cf.* also p. 241 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> Pontalis, *op. cit.*, I, 141.

<sup>3</sup> Gardiner, Commonwealth and Protectorate, II, 343-344.

Brazil was to be reconquered from Portugal and handed over to the United Provinces. Spain, on the other hand, was to be ousted from her American possessions, which were to be given to England, with a monopoly of all the American trade excepting that of Brazil.<sup>1</sup> This proposal, as well as the project of complete political amalgamation which had been revived in this year, came to nothing. These projects of political union were not mere alliances for the sake of the "Protestant Interest," as contemporaries and modern historians consider them. All these proposals emanated from a vague recognition on the part of England that the Dutch blocked her path to greatness on nearly all sides and that, unless the Dutch were willing voluntarily to sacrifice some economic advantages, the matter could be settled only by the economic survival of one nation or the other. War "*à l'outrance*," or the closest possible union, was the only solution of the situation.

In 1654 peace was finally concluded by the two contending countries. It has been said, and it seems to be unquestionably true, that Cromwell disapproved of the Dutch war, on account of the injury done thereby to the "Protestant Interest."<sup>2</sup> In the terms imposed on the Dutch, however, there is no sign of soft-heartedness on Cromwell's part. In no respect did he abate England's pretensions; and the treaty,<sup>3</sup> though it left a majority of the questions at issue open for future settlement, shows how completely prostrated the Dutch Republic was by the war. It was provided that the Dutch ships should salute English men-of-war in British seas and that justice should be meted out to those responsible for the massacre at Amboyna. The United Provinces agreed to indemnify the English merchants for the losses incurred through the detention of their ships and the seizure of the goods therein at the hands of Denmark during the war. Commissioners, to be named by both sides, were to meet to inquire into the injuries and losses suffered in the East Indies and in other waters by both

<sup>1</sup> Thurloe, State Papers, vol. ii, pp. 125-126.

<sup>2</sup> Letters and Speeches, vol. ii, p. 322.

<sup>3</sup> Dumont, vol. vi, pt. ii, pp. 74-77; Jenkinson, vol. i, pp. 44 *et seq.*



Dutch and English at each other's hands, and to appraise the damage done. These commissioners finally decided that Pularoon was to be restored to England and that the Dutch East India Company was to pay £85,000 to its English rival and £3615<sup>1</sup> to the descendants of those killed at Amboyna. This treaty is important more in what it omits than in what it contains. All of England's pretensions embodied in the Navigation Acts were tacitly assented to.

In the same year England also concluded a treaty of peace with Denmark,<sup>2</sup> by which it was provided that the latter should give to the Dutch no advantage over England in the matter of tolls and duties. Cromwell brought out the important features of this peace in his speech before Parliament in the fall of 1654.

You have a peace with the Danes, . . . and an honourable Satisfaction to your Merchants' Ships, not only to their content but to their rejoicing. I believe you will easily know it is so, — "an honourable peace." You have the Sound open, which used to be obstructed. That which was and is the strength of the nation, the shipping, will now be supplied thence. And whereas you were glad to have anything of that kind at second hand, you have now all manner of commerce there, and at as much freedom as the Dutch themselves, "who used to be the carriers and venders of it to us," and at the same rates and tolls.<sup>3</sup>

At about the same time also a treaty was concluded with Portugal, which legalized the position England had acquired by force of arms on the coast of the Indian peninsula. As already pointed out, the English and Portuguese had come into violent conflict in the East; and out of this conflict England emerged as victor. But this victory had never been acknowledged by the Portuguese government.<sup>4</sup> To the irritation produced by this long standing conflict was added, during the course of the Civil War, the resentment of the Commonwealth government

<sup>1</sup> Dumont, vol. ii, part ii, pp. 88-92.

<sup>2</sup> Dumont, vol. vi, part ii, p. 92. The Redemption Treaty had already been abrogated by the Dutch and Danish governments in 1653. — *Ibid.*, part ii, p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> Carlyle, Letters and Speeches of Cromwell (London, 1885), II, 323.

<sup>4</sup> See Hunter, II, 57, 62.

at the reception of the Royalist fleet by Portugal. Rupert had been permitted to take refuge in the Tagus, to dispose of his prizes and to refit there.<sup>1</sup> The war which ensued was brought to a close by a treaty which was concluded in 1654 and ratified finally several years later. This treaty<sup>2</sup> allowed the English merchants to trade with the Portuguese possessions in the East and West; and it also provided that, in case the Portuguese government, merchants or Brazil company should find it necessary to hire foreign ships, the preference should be given to those of England.

The year 1654 marked the turning point in the industrial career of the United Provinces. It was the first check in the prosperous career of the Dutch. Not only England, but Portugal also, benefited to their detriment. The Portuguese took advantage of the Dutch difficulties in the English war to recapture Brazil. Henceforth the Dutch had to be content to refrain from commercial expansion in the West and had to devote all their energies to keeping their possessions in the East. And here the monopoly, which the Dutch had enforced with arrogance and cruelty, was abolished by the treaty with England. This treaty recognized England's rights in the East, checked the all-absorbing progress of Dutch commerce and ultimately gave England a free hand in the Indian peninsula. In the North the Dutch attempt to monopolize the Baltic trade in naval stores was completely frustrated. On the other hand, England abandoned none of her claims—the dominion of the seas, the right to seize an enemy's goods in neutral ships, the right to a monopoly of trade with her American colonies and, above all, the right to build up her mercantile marine by legislation hostile to the interests of the Dutch.

<sup>1</sup> Firth, *Cromwell*, p. 308; Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, I, 202, 330-333, II, 383; Ranke, III, 64-65.

<sup>2</sup> Dumont, vol. vi, part ii, pp. 82-85; Jenkinson, I, 71 *et seq.*



## II. *The West-Indian Project.*

The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 brought peace to the central portion of Europe, but left Spain and France — enemies ever since the days of Charles V and Francis I — still at war. France, hampered by the recrudescence of the typically feudal movement under Condé, was unable to bring the war to a successful conclusion. The contest was practically one long-drawn battle. Both nations were eager for the support of Cromwell, in order to gain the upper hand. Spain had early recognized the Commonwealth government and had aided Blake in his warfare against Rupert's fleet.<sup>1</sup> The relations between England and Spain, the old-time Elizabethan enemies, were friendly, if not cordial. They could not, however, long remain so; since, in addition to his strong anti-Catholic feelings, Cromwell had inherited the antipathy to Spain which characterized the age of Raleigh and Drake.<sup>2</sup> Besides, there were certain specific grievances against Spain; for the Spaniards, relying on the bull of Alexander VI, regarded the English in America as intruders.<sup>3</sup> Spanish forces had attacked and destroyed several English settlements in the lesser West Indian islands.<sup>4</sup> In general, wherever they met the English in the Western hemisphere, they treated them as enemies, "though sayling to and from their owne plantations."<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, England complained that her merchants residing in Spain were subject to the pains and penalties of the Inquisition.

With France, matters stood otherwise. The court party and the government naturally sympathized with Charles I, as the husband of a French royal princess. This sympathy was shown in the assistance given to the Cavalier navy.<sup>6</sup> Reprisals

<sup>1</sup> Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, I, 341.

<sup>2</sup> Carlyle, *Letters and Speeches*, III, 120.

<sup>3</sup> *The Narrative of General Venables* (Ed. by C. H. Firth), p. 109. See also Milton's defense of Cromwell, in Masson, *Milton*, vol. v, pp. 241-243.

<sup>4</sup> Thurloe, *State Papers*, III, 59-61; Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, III, 402-403; Firth, *Cromwell*, pp. 398-399; A. Hassall, in *Social England*, IV, 262; Ranke, *op. cit.*, VII, 157; C. P. Lucas, *A Historical Geography of the British Colonies*, II, 138. <sup>5</sup> Thurloe, *State Papers*, I, 759-763; cf. also Ludlow, *Memoirs*, I, 384. <sup>6</sup> Firth, *Cromwell*, p. 309.

were undertaken by the English government, and the result was a condition of affairs such as the modern mind can hardly realize. While the two countries were nominally at peace, a fierce guerrilla warfare was carried on at sea,<sup>1</sup> not only by privateers but also by men-of-war.<sup>2</sup> Reprisals were undertaken by both governments, and war, in all but name, existed between France and England. In one month, in 1654, we hear of twenty-eight French prizes taken by the English.<sup>3</sup> In the preceding year, eight French ships of war had been attacked by the English.<sup>4</sup> The French ambassador in the United Provinces described this condition of affairs very naïvely and euphemistically, saying: "It is not a war, nor is it any hatred, but these differences between us and England may rather be named Disorders in the commerce of particular persons."<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile both Spain and France were negotiating for an English alliance. In 1652, Cardenas, the Spanish ambassador in England, held up the prospect of acquiring Calais as an inducement.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, France offered to surrender Dunkirk, although in the preceding year Mazarin had indignantly rejected the idea.<sup>7</sup> This change was due to the fear that Cromwell might form an alliance with Spain<sup>8</sup> and that he might interfere in French politics by lending assistance to Condé, whose agents were actively soliciting English assistance. The scheme to surrender Dunkirk to England at this time came to nothing. The place was besieged by the Spaniards, but Mazarin thought he could relieve it and could get the English alliance on better terms. Cromwell was, however, no man to be trifled with. Disgusted at Mazarin's tortuous policy, Blake, acting under instructions, seized and destroyed

<sup>1</sup> James B. Perkins, *France under Mazarin*, vol. ii, pp. 287-288.

<sup>2</sup> Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, I, 200; II, 131, n.; Whitelocke, *Memorials*, p. 558.

<sup>3</sup> Whitelocke, *Memorials*, pp. 588, 589.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 547.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 569.

<sup>6</sup> Gardiner, *Cromwell and Mazarin in 1652*, *English Historical Review*, XI, 480.

<sup>7</sup> Documents inédits sur l'histoire de France, *Lettres du Cardinal de Mazarin* (Ed. by Chéruel), vol. iv, pp. 575, 576. On Dec. 26, 1651, Mazarin wrote to D'Estrades: "On m'a mandé que les Anglois voudroient bien traicter de Dunkerque; mais je vous crois trop bon François, quelque avantage que vous y trouvasiez, pour recevoir une semblable proposition."

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. v, pp. 91-93, 95.



the French ships sent to the relief of Dunkirk.<sup>1</sup> This was a part of the unofficial war waged by France and England. Mazarin was dismayed by the unexpected action of the English government and complained that it was not customary to make reprisals on men-of-war.<sup>2</sup>

During the course of these negotiations, the Dutch war had broken out, and there was little prospect that England would enter into a continental alliance. In 1654, however, the negotiations were again taken up with vigor. Baron de Baas, the representative of France in England for this special object, was instructed to bring to the attention of Cromwell the feasibility of attacking Spain in the West Indies and to offer him French help in capturing Dunkirk and Mardyke from the Spaniards.<sup>3</sup> This idea of seizing the West Indies from Spain was continually pressed on Cromwell by Mazarin. But the advantages of a French or Spanish alliance were not sufficiently clear to Cromwell. He had little to gain from an alliance with either country, and his evident intention was not to embroil England in the continental conflict unless the advantages in so doing were patent. He leaned at one time toward the Spanish, at another time toward the French alliance. The question at issue seemed to be, which alliance would redound more to England's material greatness.<sup>4</sup> In 1654, having concluded the Dutch war, he proceeded, pending the negotiations for alliance, to seize colonies from both France and Spain.

*Balance of power  
Cromwell played off  
Spain vs Fr*

During the course of the Dutch war, an expedition had been planned, under the command of Major Robert Sedgwick and Captain John Leverett, to attack the Dutch settlements in New York. Massachusetts was unwilling to aid this expedition and delayed its departure.<sup>5</sup> When the expedition was about ready

<sup>1</sup> Gardiner, "Cromwell and Mazarin in 1652," *English Historical Review*, XI, 509; Documents inédits, V, 265, 310, 312, 313. For acts of retaliation on the part of France, see Verney Papers, Seventh Report, part i, Historical Manuscripts Commission, p. 458.

<sup>2</sup> Documents inédits, V, 306. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 157; also 319-140 and 164.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Bowman, The Protestant Interest in Cromwell's Foreign Relations, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Thurlow, State Papers, I, 565; II, 418-420; Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1675-1676 (Ed. by Sainsbury), p. 89.

*capture of Nova Scotia*

to start, news arrived of the conclusion of peace with the Dutch. As unofficial war existed between France and England, Sedgwick had, as was customary, instructions to seize French ships.<sup>1</sup> He therefore determined to use his force, originally designed against the Dutch, "in ranging the coast against the French, who use tradinge and fishinge heereabout." <sup>2</sup> The result of this expedition was the capture of the forts, St. John, Port Royal and Penobscot, and the addition of Nova Scotia to the English colonial empire.<sup>3</sup> The French ambassador, Bordeaux, protested against this high-handed action,<sup>4</sup> but to no avail. It was rumored that he would be recalled; but Mazarin needed the English alliance too much to go to war on this ground,<sup>5</sup> and Cromwell had no intention of ever giving up an inch of territory over which the English flag had once floated. He wrote a personal letter to Leverett, instructing him to defend and keep the territory seized;<sup>6</sup> and as long as Cromwell lived, Nova Scotia—or Acadia, as it was then called—remained an English possession.<sup>7</sup>

This happened while England and France were negotiating on the basis of an alliance. In the same year, while similar negotiations were under way with Spain, the comprehensive scheme of an attack on the Spanish American colonies was planned. This project arose from the underlying conviction that the most valuable possessions in the New World were held by Spain—a conviction that was the inevitable consequence of mercantilist theories. Spain, holding the greater

<sup>1</sup> Thurloe, State Papers, II, 425. The admiral in command of the West Indian expedition also had instructions to attack French vessels. — Granville Penn, Memorials of Sir William Penn, II, 25.

<sup>2</sup> Thurloe, II, 418.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 582; Cal. State Papers, Colonial Series, 1675–1676, pp. 88–90.

<sup>4</sup> Gardiner, Commonwealth and Protectorate, III, 389.

<sup>5</sup> Thurloe, II, 689. A Letter of Intelligence from Paris to Thurloe in October, 1654, says: "The report of Canada continues; and if it be certain the English took it, they will recal the ambassador Bordeaux, as they vaunt at court; but these are bugbears. Mazarin desires nothing more on Earth than peace with the Protector, without which he thinks himself always in danger."

<sup>6</sup> Carlyle, Cromwell, III, 405. This letter is also in Publications Massachusetts Historical Society, series iii, vol. vii, p. 121.

<sup>7</sup> Justin Winsor, Narrative and Critical History, IV, 145; cf. also Gardiner, Commonwealth and Protectorate, III, 423.



part of the West Indies and of Central America and South America, was deemed to possess all that was valuable in the New World. Tropical colonization, armed commerce with semi-civilized people, the acquisition of exotic products and, above all, the possession of mines appealed to the mercantilists more than did settlements on barren coasts such as those of New England. The advice of Bacon, not to trust in the uncertain hope of mines,<sup>1</sup> was not heeded in the Cromwellian age. [ In addition to the then current economic ideas, a strong factor in inducing Cromwell to undertake this expedition against the Spanish colonies was his need of money.<sup>2</sup> For Cromwell suffered from an inadequate revenue just as much as did the Stuarts, and in a sense even more so, as his schemes were more ambitious. His financial troubles tended to make him dependent on Parliament, and parliamentary control was as irksome to him as it had been to Charles I. The attack on Spain's colonies and the acquisition of their silver mines promised a ready solution of this difficulty. In addition, this attack on Spain corresponded to Cromwell's strong anti-Catholic views. It was a blow to the "Roman Babylon . . . of which the Spaniard is the great underpropper."<sup>3</sup> In fighting Spain, Cromwell sincerely believed that he was fighting "the Lord's battles." But there can be no doubt that these battles would never have ✓ been fought, if victory in them would not have added to England's wealth and greatness.<sup>4</sup> The Anglo-Saxon mind demands some justification for its actions. It occasionally invents this justification, but always sincerely believes in it. And Cromwell, as Mr. Gardiner has aptly said, is "the most typical Englishman of all time."<sup>5</sup> Economic motives were the cause, religious motives the justification, of the West Indian project.

<sup>1</sup> Bacon, Works (Cambridge, 1863), XII, 196.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Thurloe, State Papers, II, 391, 392, 414.

<sup>3</sup> Carlyle, Cromwell, III, 88; Thurloe, IV, 131.

<sup>4</sup> Clarke Papers, III, 203. We learn that in the council it was debated whether the force released by the cessation of the Dutch war should be turned against France or against Spain. It was decided to attack Spain as the great enemy of Protestantism and because "the attemptinge the Spaniard the most profitable of any in the world, . . . his territories very great and may well admitt a sound losse."

<sup>5</sup> Gardiner, Cromwell's Place in History, p. 116.

The French government had been continually urging on Cromwell the advisability of attacking the Spanish colonies, laying stress on the weakness of the Spanish defenses and on the value of these possessions to England.<sup>1</sup> The principal English adviser of the expedition was one Thomas Gage,<sup>2</sup> author of *The English-American, or A New Survey of the West Indies*, published in 1648. This book gave "such an account of the feebleness, as well as of the wealth, of the Spaniards in those parts, as made him [Cromwell] conclude that it would be both a great and a easy conquest to seize on their dominions."<sup>3</sup> The prospect of great wealth gained by an attack on Spain was held up as inducement to Cromwell.<sup>4</sup> In 1654, Gage presented a memorial to the government, summarizing the views given more at length in his book.<sup>5</sup> He claimed that the silver mines in America were Spain's pillar of strength and he advised an attack on the Spanish colonies, which he alleged were poorly fortified and defended. The justification for such an attack he found in Spain's numerous attacks on the English West Indian islands. His plan was a comprehensive one—to drive Spain out of the West Indian islands and out of Central and South America. These views were supported by Colonel Modyford, who was identified with Barbadoes, and was consequently supposed to be well acquainted with the position of affairs in America.<sup>6</sup>

The preparations for the enterprise were careful and deliberate.<sup>7</sup> The geography of the Gulf of Mexico was diligently

<sup>1</sup> Loménie de Brienne, one of the contemporary French ministers, sums up the course of French diplomacy in this matter. He writes: "Nous nous prévalûmes du désir de cette nation d'avoir un pied dans les Indes, et, lui faisant voir la facilité quelle avoit d'y réussir, nous lui fîmes oublier l'étroite amitié dans laquelle elle avoit vécu avec les Espagnols. Nous insinuâmes que l'espérance d'un bon commerce ne devoit pas empêcher les Anglois de songer à se rendre maîtres des richesses des Indes occidentales."—*Mémoires du Comte de Brienne*, pp. 149-150 in the *Nouvelle Collection des Mémoires* (Ed. by Michaud and Poujoulat).

<sup>2</sup> The *Memoirs of Edmund Ludlow* (Ed. by C. H. Firth), I, 417; Whitelocke, *Memorials*, p. 602. <sup>3</sup> Burnet, *History of My Own Time* (Ed. by Airy), I, 134-135.

<sup>4</sup> Frank Strong, "Causes of Cromwell's West-Indian Expedition," *American Historical Review*, IV, 233-235.

<sup>5</sup> Thurloe, III, 59-61.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 62.

<sup>7</sup> Already in January, 1654, "the Protector advised about sending a Fleet to the West-Indies."—Whitelocke, *Memorials*, p. 592.



studied, and pilots who had knowledge of these waters were consulted.<sup>1</sup> Cromwell himself was one day surprised, intently studying a map of the Gulf of Mexico and measuring distances thereon.<sup>2</sup> The scope of the attack was to be a broad one. It was the intention of Cromwell to seize all the Spanish possessions in the New World. As he himself wrote: "We thinke, and it is much designed amongst us, to strive with the Spanyard for the mastery of all those seas."<sup>3</sup> In the debate in the council preceding the expedition, it was discussed whether it would be advisable to make only a beginning this year—"an entrance for a future carriage the whole," or "to make a thorough worke and putt for all this summer."<sup>4</sup> The project in general was merely a reversion to the idea contained in the project of alliance which Cromwell had offered to the Dutch in the preceding year. Then, as now, Spain was to be driven from America. Not only were the rich islands of Hispaniola and Cuba to be seized, but Mexico and all the possessions on the mainland were to be taken.<sup>5</sup> A vast extension of England's colonial empire was planned, and at the same time Spain was to be deprived of her "pillar of strength"—the American mines.

*attack on  
Spanish America -  
capture of Jamaica*

It is not necessary to describe the fortunes of this carefully prepared expedition. Cromwell was misled as to the poor condition of the Spanish defenses. The English were defeated at Hispaniola, and the sole result of the vast scheme was the acquisition of Jamaica.

The scheme, as has already been pointed out, bears the strong imprint of mercantilistic theories, according to which colonies like New England were deemed of no value to the mother country. Hence, one part of the design was to people the colonies acquired from Spain with settlers from New England.<sup>6</sup> Thinking that New England, on account of its harsh climate, could be only a temporary refuge for the Puritans,

<sup>1</sup> Thurloe, II, 250, 391-392.

<sup>2</sup> Burnet, History of My Own Time, I, 135.

<sup>3</sup> Thurloe, IV, 633-634; Carlyle, III, 90-93.

<sup>4</sup> Clarke Papers, III, 204.

<sup>5</sup> Venables' Narrative, p. 111.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Clarke Papers, III, 205.

Cromwell planned "a more or less general removal of New England people to Jamaica."<sup>1</sup> The attempt was made,<sup>2</sup> but met with serious opposition, and came to nothing.<sup>3</sup>

Seeley can find in the West Indian project "no trace of any profound calculation." Of Cromwell's intentions in this matter he says: "Notions of trade seem at most but secondary in his mind, and deep plans foreign to his nature. . . . Accordingly, his attack upon St. Domingo seems to have had no remote object."<sup>4</sup> This view is based on a lack of knowledge of the facts. As will be readily seen from the foregoing, the fundamental motives for the expedition were economic and there was profound calculation. It had a very remote object—the extension of the English flag over all of Spanish America. It did not accomplish this, and the expedition was, from the standpoint of the day, a heartrending failure. It merely added Jamaica, a practically uninhabited and seemingly worthless island, to the English colonies. Yet from the historical standpoint the expedition was a success. As Ranke has well said: "In the very heart of the Spanish colonies, an English one arose, which first gave their value to the other West Indian possessions of England."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Frank Strong, "A Forgotten Danger to the New England Colonies," Report of the American Historical Association, 1898, pp. 89, 91-92; Thurloe, IV, 130.

<sup>2</sup> Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1675-1676, p. 101; Thurloe, IV, 634; Carlyle, III, 89-93; Memorials of Sir William Penn, II, 585-589.

<sup>3</sup> Thurloe, V, 6-7, 510. Egerton (*op. cit.*, p. 61) has suggested that the desire to transplant the New Englanders was to lessen the independent spirit of these colonies and to hold them more firmly as English possessions. The suggestion is interesting, but the more probable explanation of the design lies in the prevailing economic doctrines, according to which the mother country must suffer economically through such colonies as New England.

<sup>4</sup> Seeley, *op. cit.*, II, 75.

<sup>5</sup> Ranke, *op. cit.*, III, 200.



## CROMWELL'S POLICY IN ITS ECONOMIC ASPECTS. II.

III. *The Continental Project and the French Alliance.*

THE expedition to the West Indies, as well as the Dutch war, marks, as Mr. Gardiner has well said, "the decline of the spiritual ecstasies of Puritanism and the rise of the mundane spirit."<sup>1</sup> Cromwell's policy had become more and more one devoted merely to England's material greatness. Commercial and territorial expansion was the goal ever in view. From his lips there were many speeches in favor of an alliance of Protestantism against Catholicism, and the cause of his religion was unquestionably one to which he was sincerely devoted; but the fundamental motives for his policy were economic, and only to a minimum degree were his actions influenced by the "Protestant Interest." There is no justification for the view advanced by Seeley and Frederic Harrison that "the fundamental principle of the policy of the Protectorate . . . is the union of all the Protestant Powers of Europe under the leadership of England."<sup>2</sup> That Cromwell had such a plan is well known: in fact, it was a hobby of his, but one to which his actual policy was not subservient. He drew back whenever the consequences of this Protestant policy brought him into conflict with England's material greatness. His ideal was an anachronism, — a heritage of the Elizabethan era, — but in actual policy he was ahead of his times, the legitimate predecessor of Clive, Chatham and Cecil Rhodes. As Mr. Firth epigrammatically says: "Looked at from one point of view, he seemed as practical as a commercial traveller; from another, a Puritan Don Quixote." It was "the commercial traveller"

<sup>1</sup> Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, II, 478-479; *Cromwell's Place in History*, pp. 94-95.

<sup>2</sup> Seeley, *British Policy*, II, 46; Harrison, *Oliver Cromwell*, p. 218.

who acted, and the "Puritan Don Quixote" who dreamt and spoke.

Viewed from the standpoint of the Protestant Interest, Cromwell's great enemy was Spain. Yet for a long time he hesitated whether or not to make an alliance with this country. On the other hand, his natural friend was the Dutch republic, with which, in the opening years of his Protectorate, he was engaged in a fierce struggle. When, finally, Cromwell's desire to add the Spanish-American colonies to England's possessions brought about a break with Spain, it was with Catholic France that he made an alliance. And this alliance was directed against the Dutch even more than against Spain. The United Provinces stand out conspicuously as the great antagonist and enemy of England. Economic opposition to the Dutch is the fundamental note of Cromwell's policy after the conclusion of the West-Indian expedition. It was a policy which was in direct antithesis to his ideals, but one which was forced upon him by Dutch hostility and by the fact that economic forces made this hostility inevitable. It is characteristic of Cromwell, as "the most typical Englishman," that he abandoned his ideals, when he was brought face to face with the stern logic of economic facts.

In spite of the attack on the Spanish West Indies, it had been expected with some degree of assurance by Cromwell that peace would be preserved in Europe.<sup>1</sup> France had not resented the conquest of Acadia, nor was it inevitable that Spain should go to war on account of the attack on Hispaniola. The extent to which unofficial war was carried on by the European states in the seventeenth century is such that we can scarcely realize it, and nowhere was the guerilla warfare deemed more legitimate than on the Spanish Main. It was a reasonable assumption that Spain would not proclaim war. But Cardenas, the Spanish ambassador in England, was sincere when he said that giving up the West-Indian monopoly was equivalent to depriving his master of one of his eyes. Consequently war between England and Spain in Europe followed the West-Indian expedition.

<sup>1</sup> Clarke Papers, III, 205.



The effect of this war was to throw England into the hands of France. As soon as it was seen that Spain intended to resent the attack on her colonies, negotiations for a French alliance progressed with new zeal. A treaty was about to be concluded when Cromwell heard of the brutal treatment of the Waldenses in Piedmont by French troops returning from Italy. France's indirect connection with this persecution delayed the negotiations; but finally, in November, 1655, much to Mazarin's delight,<sup>1</sup> Cromwell concluded a treaty of commerce with France, which brought to an end the fierce guerilla war that had been carried on during the last six years.<sup>2</sup> This treaty<sup>3</sup> was, however, merely a prelude to the treaty of alliance which was concluded in 1657.<sup>4</sup> Mazarin had been holding back, but the success of Condé at Valenciennes made him again desirous of a closer bond with England.<sup>5</sup> This treaty of March 23, 1657, provided that Gravelines, Mardyke and Dunkirk were to be besieged by the joint forces of the allies, and that Dunkirk and Mardyke, when captured, were to be handed over to England. Cromwell, at the same time, renounced all pretensions to any other places in Flanders.

What did England want with Dunkirk, a port on the continent? What was Cromwell's object in trying to get possession of Dunkirk and its outpost Mardyke? Thurloe tells us that Cromwell "always much longed for" a footing on the continent.<sup>6</sup> From a document attributed to the same authority we learn that Cromwell was influenced by three reasons: in the first place, he would thereby secure himself from invasions on the part of Charles II and, at the same time, he himself would have a means of invading the continent, if he so desired; secondly, the possession of such a port would be "a bridle on

<sup>1</sup> Documents Inédits (ed. D'Avenel), VII, 127.

<sup>2</sup> Even at the time when this treaty was about to be concluded, hostilities between England and France on the sea continued. — *Ibid.*, VI, 40.

<sup>3</sup> Dumont, Corps universel diplomatique, vol. vi, part ii, p. 121.

<sup>4</sup> Guizot, Histoire de la Révolution d'Angleterre, IV, 597-605, prints the treaty *in extenso*; Dumont, vol. vi, part ii, p. 224, gives only an extract.

<sup>5</sup> A. Chéruel, Histoire de France sous le Ministère de Mazarin, III, 23.

<sup>6</sup> Thurloe, I, 761.

the Dutch"; and finally, Dunkirk was essential to the safety of English trade, which was disturbed by the pirates from that town and from Ostend.<sup>1</sup> The possession of Dunkirk would be a veritable thorn in the side of the Dutch, as England, with men-of-war on both sides of the Channel, could absolutely control this highway of commerce.

More specific reasons for acquiring Dunkirk are given in a document called "The Benefitt to bee in aid of the Place."<sup>2</sup> Among the advantages to be gained, those of an economic character stand out prominently in this paper. It was argued that the place was very convenient for European trade and that its possession would give access to Germany, "without being more behoulding to the Hollanders." Besides, Dunkirk was said to be "the fittest place in Chrissendom for the stapell of cloath, for ther you will have that great benefitt of the customs which now the Hollanders have of that commoedite." And, finally, it was contended that Dunkirk was a place "much covetted for fishing" and one of the cheapest places for ship-building. The general line of economic thought was that the possession of some port or ports on the continent would be of immense value to England in her commercial rivalry with the Dutch.<sup>3</sup>

This alliance of Cromwell with France has been frequently criticised as a monstrous error, contributing to the greatness of France during the following years. It has been held that, instead of allying himself with France, Cromwell should have nipped the rising power of that country in the bud.<sup>4</sup> In order

<sup>1</sup> This document is in Stowe Mss. 185, pp. 187-200, and is reprinted by Bischoffshausen, *Die Politik des Protector Oliver Cromwell*, Appendix, p. 187 *et seq.*; cf. also a different version, but the same idea, in Somers's Tracts, VI, 329-336, and in Bischoffshausen, *loc. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> Printed by Mr. Gardiner in *English Historical Review*, XI, 484-485.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Ludlow, *Memoirs*, II, 96. Despite the treaty of peace of 1654, ill feeling existed, on account of the still unsettled fishery dispute and on account of the still frequent conflicts in the East. See *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series*, 1656-1657, pp. 53, 57.

<sup>4</sup> This criticism appears in Ludlow, *Memoirs*, II, 3, and in other contemporary writings, such as *The World's Mistake in Oliver Cromwell* (London, 1668), p. 3; Montague Burrows, *History of the Foreign Policy of Great Britain*, p. 24, has revived this criticism; Mr. Hassall, *Social England*, IV, 260, has ably refuted it.



to keep the balance of power in Europe, it is claimed, Cromwell should have joined forces with Spain in her contest with France. It is not necessary to answer this criticism in detail. Those who are responsible for it have overlooked the essential fact that, while France was to be in the eighteenth century England's great antagonist, the Dutch republic was England's great rival in the seventeenth century. While this alliance with France was specifically directed against Spain, in a deeper and truer sense it was aimed against the Dutch republic. According to Thurloe, one reason that induced Cromwell to enter into the French alliance was that he might depend upon France against the Dutch, who were then trying to treat with Spain in a manner hostile to English trade and commerce. In addition, Thurloe says: "This the Protector did see, being always jealous of that people."<sup>1</sup> The territorial advantages to accrue to England, while to be gained at Spain's expense, were to be used to the detriment of Dutch commerce.<sup>2</sup>

The Dutch were not pleased at the prospect of having England as a neighbor on the continent and exhibited a good deal of annoyance at the Anglo-French treaty.<sup>3</sup> In March, 1657, the English ambassador in France wrote to Thurloe that "the Hollanders ill inclinations toward England continue; they have undertaken the transport of the Spanish money from the Canaries."<sup>4</sup> Spain made use of this feeling and endeavored to form an alliance with the Dutch, holding out as an inducement the prospect of free trade with the Spanish colonies.<sup>5</sup> In some quarters it was expected that the Dutch would openly ally themselves with Spain.<sup>6</sup>

At about the time that this alliance with France was consummated, France and the United Provinces were brought almost to the verge of war by De Ruyter's seizure of some French ships in the Mediterranean. France claimed that this

<sup>1</sup> Somers, Tracts, VI, 329-330; Bischoffshausen, Appendix, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> A letter of Courtin to Bordeaux, February 2, 1657, mentions dread on the part of the Dutch that the Anglo-French alliance will molest their commerce. — Thurloe, VI, 105.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 100.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>6</sup> Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1656-1657, p. 339.

action of the Dutch admiral was unprovoked,<sup>1</sup> and the Dutch republic claimed that it was but a just act of reprisal.<sup>2</sup> It was expected that war would inevitably break out.<sup>3</sup>

The English ambassador in France, Lockhart, whom Clarendon has described as "a man of great address in treaty" and as one "who had a marvellous credit with the Cardinal,"<sup>4</sup> tried to avert the impending conflict between France and the United Provinces, in which it seemed inevitable that England must become involved.<sup>5</sup> He advised against a rupture with the Dutch as unseasonable. Lockhart was unquestionably acting on direct instructions from Cromwell in this matter,<sup>6</sup> and it is known that Cromwell approved of his conduct in the negotiations.<sup>7</sup>

The negotiations for enlisting Cromwell's support against the Dutch were, however, not carried on through Lockhart, but through the French ambassador in England, Bordeaux. Mazarin was confident that the English would, for commercial reasons, welcome a war between the French and the Dutch; and he adds: "Le Roy sera tres ayse que les Anglois fassent tout le commerce, et les favorisera pour cet effect."<sup>8</sup> In May, 1657, he wrote to Bordeaux that if war resulted, he should get a fleet from England; and at the same time, probably to excite Cromwell's anger, he pointed out the fact that the Dutch were helping the Spanish Plate fleet to escape the English men-of-war.<sup>9</sup>

In Dumont's collection there is printed a treaty between France and England, bearing date May 9, 1657.<sup>10</sup> This treaty was unquestionably never ratified,<sup>11</sup> and no record of it can be

<sup>1</sup> Documents Inédits, VII, 451, 458, 463.

<sup>2</sup> Lefèvre-Pontalis, John de Witt, I, 230; Chéruel, *op. cit.*, III, 58-59.

<sup>3</sup> Thurloe, VI, 42; Calendar of the Clarendon State Papers, III, 278, 287; Calendar State Papers, Domestic Series, 1656-1657, pp. 340-341, 352.

<sup>4</sup> Clarendon's History (ed. W. D. Macray), VI, 10.

<sup>5</sup> Thurloe, VI, 149-150.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 181; *cf.* also p. 220.

<sup>7</sup> Calendar of the Clarendon State Papers, III, 270.

<sup>8</sup> Documents Inédits, VII, 452.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 466; *cf.* also Thurloe, VI, 227, 262.

<sup>10</sup> Corps universel diplomatique, vol. vi, part ii, p. 178.

<sup>11</sup> Brienne, Mémoires, p. 150, says: "Ce fut à trois différentes fois qu'on s'accorda avec ces insulaires," omitting all reference to this treaty, and referring properly only to the duly ratified treaties, November 3, 1655, March 23, 1657, and March 28, 1658.

found in the English or in the French archives. It is not, however, purely apocryphal, as Guizot says,<sup>1</sup> but seems to have been some proposition for English help against the Dutch, made by Mazarin during his difficulty with the latter.

This document, which is entitled "Secretissimum inviolabile Foedus," after reciting the injury inflicted by De Ruyter on France, provides for a close offensive and defensive alliance of England and France against the Dutch. Cromwell was to furnish from thirty-six to forty vessels, and, in case of necessity, even a greater number, to attack the Dutch ships. For the war against Spain, Cromwell was also to furnish an army of at least 12,000 men. In return, Cromwell was to receive Ostend, Gravelines, Nieuwport and any other cities which were captured in the Spanish Netherlands. On the other hand, whatever Dutch cities might be captured were to be turned over to France. There were some other provisions in this unratified treaty referring to the Baltic difficulty, which we shall discuss later on.

From the material that is available, it is impossible to say what attitude Cromwell took towards this proposition. We know that the English ambassador in France had instructions to remain strictly neutral. But we also know that Cromwell's intention was to acquire more than one seaport town on the continent, and that his death alone interfered with this plan.<sup>2</sup> The idea of gaining the Flemish seaports was doubtless very attractive to Cromwell, and it seems probable that he considered Mazarin's proposition. The Dutch ambassador in England, Nieupoort, in June, 1657, wrote of the great naval preparations in England and added that he heard that Cromwell had "a great design in hand." But at the same time he wrote that Cromwell had assured him that there was no truth in the rumor that France was about to secure a number of ships in England.<sup>3</sup> Cromwell was, however, not entirely ingenuous in

<sup>1</sup> Guizot, *op. cit.*, IV, 367, n.

<sup>2</sup> Thurloe, I, 761; Bischoffshausen, *op. cit.*, Appendix, containing in parallel columns the three versions of Thurloe's account of English foreign affairs.

<sup>3</sup> Thurloe, VI, 302.



his diplomatic transactions. This rumor that Cromwell was about to aid France gained credence also in Paris, whence the Dutch ambassador there, Boreel, wrote that he had heard that Cromwell would no longer remain a friend to the United Provinces in case the Dutch broke with France.<sup>1</sup> Lockhart, not being informed of the negotiations carried on in England, categorically denied this.<sup>2</sup>

Whatever was the attitude taken by Cromwell, whether his neutrality was assumed or not, it is certain that, in case of war between France and the Dutch, it was expected in well-informed circles that England would aid France.<sup>3</sup> It is reported that English merchants in the United Provinces, in view of such an eventuality, had put their goods in the names of other people.<sup>4</sup> And we also know that the Duke of York went to The Hague, "hoping that if there be a breach betwixt the English and Dutch, he may have a squadron."<sup>5</sup> Mazarin certainly expected England to side with him.<sup>6</sup> In May, 1657, he wrote to the French ambassador in the United Provinces:

Nous prenons nos mesures pour armer, dans trois semaines ou un mois, quarante vaisseaux de guerre en Angleterre, et l'on en armera en France. . . . Et, à propos de commerce, j'adjousteray que l'on n'aura pas grande peine, la rupture arrivant, de mettre les Anglois et ceux de Hambourg en possession de tout le commerce que faisoient les Hollandois; ce que me faict juger que les Anglois mesmes au lieu de travailler a l'accomodement, pourroient bien, sous main, travailler a la rupture.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Thurloe, VI, 273.

<sup>2</sup> In May, 1657, Thurloe wrote to Henry Cromwell that both sides offered to make Cromwell the judge between them (Thurloe, VI, 261). In the same month, a little later, Lockhart wrote that Mazarin complained that he had heard that Cromwell would intervene in favor of the Dutch and also that the Dutch ambassador complained that he had heard that Cromwell would aid France. Lockhart says: "I did to each of them clear myself of both these aspersions" (Thurloe, VI, 287-288). On May 21 Lockhart wrote that Mazarin desired Cromwell's mediation in the Dutch difficulty (Thurloe, VI, 298).

<sup>3</sup> Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1656-1657, p. 382.

<sup>4</sup> Thurloe, VI, 247.

<sup>5</sup> Calendar Clarendon State Papers, III, 299.

<sup>6</sup> Documents Inédits, VII, 451.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 462 et seq.

The necessity for Cromwell's coming to a decision fell away, however, as the Dutch and French, thanks to the ability of De Thou, settled their grievances pacifically.<sup>1</sup>

To return now to the treaty of alliance of March 23, 1657. This treaty had been concluded for only a year and was renewed again a year later, March 23, 1658.<sup>2</sup> The net result of the military operations provided for in these treaties was, so far as England was concerned, that Dunkirk and its outpost Mardyke became English possessions. England had become again, as in the days before Mary, a continental power. The possession of Dunkirk was of great economic importance and was a menace to Dutch economic supremacy. As such, it was not viewed with satisfaction by the Dutch, who gave free vent to their disapproval at England's gaining this seaport. At one time it seemed as if, in consequence thereof, the Dutch might even join Spain in its war against England and France.<sup>3</sup> The prospect of a war with the Dutch did not deter Cromwell from pursuing his ends. As already stated, at the time of his death he was negotiating with France with a view to acquiring other Flemish seaports.<sup>4</sup> His plan was the comprehensive one of making the entire seacoast of the Spanish Netherlands English territory.

<sup>1</sup> Documents Inédits, VIII, 14; Pontalis, *op. cit.*, I, 231.

<sup>2</sup> Documents Inédits, VIII, Introd., p. ii *et seq.*, and p. 329, n.; Dumont, vol. vi, part ii, p. 224, prints only an extract.

<sup>3</sup> On May 21, 1658, Mazarin wrote to Bordeaux: "Pour ce que est des vingt-quatre vaisseaux que les Hollandois ont armez, le soupçon de S. Alt. [Oliver Cromwell] n'est pas mal fondé. J'ay envoyé, la nuit passée, un gentilhomme à Mardick pour advertir M. l'ambassadeur Lockhart que M. le comte de Brienne me mande de Paris que le fils de l'ambassadeur de Hollande l'estoit allé trouver pour luy dire que MM. les Estats luy avoient donné ordre de faire scavoir au Roy qu'ils ne verroyent pas avec plaisir les conquestes que les armes de Sa Mté. pourroyent faire du costé de la mer conjointement avec les Anglois et pour les partages avec L'Angleterre, adjoustant d'autres discours qui ont fait soupçonner à M. de Brienne que leur intention seroit de l'empescher, s'ils pouvoient; mais, pour moy, je ne les croy pas si hardis que d'ozer declarer la guerre à ce royaume et à M. le Protecteur tout à la fois."—Documents Inédits, VIII, 365–366.

<sup>4</sup> *Cf.*, in addition to the authorities cited above, The World's Mistake in Oliver Cromwell (London, 1668), p. 4. This pamphlet is reprinted in the Harleian Misc., VII, 347. On the authorship of this pamphlet, see Guernsey Jones, The Diplomatic Relations between Cromwell and Charles X, Appendix.

This Dutch opposition to Cromwell's plans is the salient fact in the history of the last years of Cromwell's life.<sup>1</sup> Whitelocke recognized this clearly, when he said that most of the Dutch "were Enemies in heart to the Protector, and did but watch for an occasion to show it."<sup>2</sup> Their opposition was manifested not only towards the Anglo-French alliance, but also towards Cromwell's Baltic policy. In one of his last speeches Cromwell treats of his attitude towards the Dutch, who, as he insinuates, prefer profit to godliness. He accused the Dutch of being ungrateful for the assistance rendered them by Elizabeth and claimed that they had hired ships to bring over a Royalist army to England. Especially did he complain of Dutch intrigues in the Baltic, the source of naval stores so essential to the shipping interests of England.<sup>3</sup>

To understand what was happening in the North, we must retrace our steps. Shortly after the conclusion of the commercial treaty with England in 1655, Christina of Sweden abdicated. Her successor, Charles Gustavus, had inherited the martial ardor and ambitious plans of Gustavus Adolphus. His design was to make the Baltic a Swedish lake. These plans brought him into conflict with Poland, Brandenburg, Denmark and also with the Dutch.<sup>4</sup> For the successful accomplishment of his purpose he thought that he required English assistance; and, with this object in view, various embassies were sent to England. What Charles X failed to realize was that England, as little as the Dutch republic, could afford to see the Swedes supreme in the Baltic.<sup>5</sup> Her policy was not to allow the source of her naval stores to come absolutely under the control of one great power. Hence, the vague commercial privileges which Sweden offered in return for Cromwell's assistance were rejected.<sup>6</sup> Sweden's proposition practically amounted to an

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bischoffshausen, *op. cit.*, p. 25; Firth, *Cromwell*, pp. 372, 373.

<sup>2</sup> Whitelocke, *Memorials*, p. 627.

<sup>3</sup> Carlyle, *op. cit.*, III, 277.

<sup>4</sup> Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, III, 426-430.

<sup>5</sup> Cromwell, says Thurloe, would not permit that "the Swede should conquer the Dane and possess all those countreyes and, being truly become powerfull, engross the whole trade of the Baltique Sea."—Bischoffshausen, *op. cit.*, Appendix, p. 215.

<sup>6</sup> G. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 24; cf. Masson, *Milton*, V, 246, 270.



offer of alliance against the Dutch. Cromwell, on his part, proposed a general alliance of all the Protestant powers of Europe, including the Dutch, against both branches of the house of Hapsburg.<sup>1</sup> This proposal did not meet with Charles X's approval; he was opposed to Cromwell's vague plan for a general Protestant alliance, and especially to the inclusion of the Dutch therein.<sup>2</sup> Of these long-drawn-out negotiations<sup>3</sup> in the years 1655 and 1656 nothing resulted but the unimportant commercial treaty of 1656.<sup>4</sup>

During the course of the following year, as Sweden's position in the Polish war became more difficult, Denmark determined to attack its ancient rival. In this, Denmark was supported by the Dutch, who expected to gain from Danish preponderance in the Baltic especial privileges for their commerce. Cromwell realized this and sent Meadowe as ambassador to Denmark, with the mission of bringing to an end the war between Sweden and Denmark. He was to point out

how much the freedom of Navigation and Commerce in the Baltic would be impeached thereby, to the prejudice of the Neighbouring Nations, but of none more than England, as continually fetching naval stores from those countries.<sup>5</sup>

At the same time Jephson was sent to Sweden. In his secret instructions he was told to ask for the temporary possession of Bremen, which then belonged to Sweden, as security for any assistance to be given by Cromwell.<sup>6</sup> Bremen would have been

<sup>1</sup> Whitelocke, *Memorials*, p. 624. In April, 1656, Cromwell said "that he was willing, in case of a nearer Alliance or of an Union concerning the Protestant Interest, to have Our Neighbors and Allies, the Low-Countries, included therein; and that he thought it did become him to have a particular care of them, and to take them into such a Treaty or Alliance; and that he was not willing to do any such thing without them." <sup>2</sup> Whitelocke, *Memorials*, pp. 619, 620, 621.

<sup>3</sup> During the course of these negotiations some interesting questions were raised as to what constituted contraband of war, and as to the rights of neutral ships and of neutral goods in times of war. See *ibid.*, pp. 621, 626-633.

<sup>4</sup> Dumont, *op. cit.*, vol. vi, part ii, pp. 125-127.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Philip Meadowe, *A Narrative of the Principal Actions occurring in the Wars betwixt Sweden and Denmark* (London, 1677), p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> Thurloe, VI, 479. Instructions of August 22, 1657. On a previous occasion also Cromwell had asked for possession of Bremen as a guaranty; see G. Jones, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

of enormous value to English commerce, and Cromwell's selection of this city is significant. Though only temporary possession was asked, Cromwell probably reasoned that it could easily become permanent. For the present, however, nothing came of this attempt at mediation, as neither Sweden nor Denmark was anxious for peace.<sup>1</sup>

At about the same time as this embassy of Meadowe, the Swedish ambassador in England proposed an alliance of Sweden and England against Denmark. Sweden, in order to restore the balance of power in the Sound, was to resume possession of its ancient provinces on the Scandinavian side of the Sound, which was then held by Denmark.<sup>2</sup> In return, Cromwell was offered various German territories, such as Oldenburg and Münster; or, if he did not care to gain a foothold in Germany, he could have had some Danish land.<sup>3</sup> Similar proposals were made later, even Bremen being offered to Cromwell.<sup>4</sup>

In the unratified treaty between England and France of May 9, 1657,<sup>5</sup> there are several clauses bearing on the Baltic question. France and England agreed to assist Sweden in its war against Denmark, and with this object in view Cromwell was to capture the forts controlling the entrance to the Baltic. Whatever territory was acquired, either at the expense of Denmark or at that of any other country, was to be disposed of by Cromwell as he thought best, provided that English vessels might have no advantage over those of France in going through the Sound. It was to some plan such as this that the author of *The World's Mistake in Oliver Cromwell*, an attack on Cromwell published in 1668, referred when he said: "I am not ignorant that this error is excused, by pretending that we were to have had Elsinore and Cronenburge Castle, . . . by which we should have been Masters of the Sound, and consequently of the Baltick."

<sup>1</sup> G. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 59, 66-67.

<sup>5</sup> Dumont, vol. vi, part ii, p. 178, clauses xiii-xviii.

We do not know exactly what attitude Cromwell took toward these propositions. It seems probable that his plan was to take advantage of Sweden's difficulties and to gain either Bremen or the control of the Sound forts. Nothing came of these plans, from the fact that Sweden, contrary to all expectations, did not need foreign aid. Notwithstanding the fact that Poland, Brandenburg, the German emperor, Denmark and the Dutch were arrayed against him, Charles Gustavus emerged victor in the conflict. Denmark was overrun and was completely at his mercy. Cromwell, though friendly to Sweden, did not wish matters to go too far; he could not allow Sweden to become absolutely mistress in the Baltic. Hence, in conjunction with France, he intervened and brought about the peace of Roeskilde, February, 1658.

The English mediator took an active part in the negotiations leading up to the treaty, preventing Sweden from asking too much and seeing to it that nothing was done prejudicial to the interests of England. He especially objected to the proposition to join Norway to Sweden, because it would give Sweden the sole possession of the source of naval stores, — “too great a Treasure,” as he said, “to be entrusted in one hand.”<sup>1</sup> The chief provision of the final treaty was that giving Sweden possession of the Danish provinces on the Scandinavian side of the Sound.<sup>2</sup> “By this means,” as Meadowe says, “the Swede is become Master of one Bank of the Sound as the Dane is of the other.”<sup>3</sup> This treaty was of immense importance to England. It secured the neutrality of the Baltic. No longer was the entrance to this sea, one of the chief commercial arteries, under the control of a single power, and that one in close alliance with England's most bitter rival, the United Provinces. With Sweden in control of one side of the Sound, England's commerce in the Baltic was apparently safe.

<sup>1</sup> Meadowe, *op. cit.*, p. 58. Cf. also some correspondence of Thurloe and Meadowe, ed. by Edward Jenks, *English Historical Review*, VII, 720-742.

<sup>2</sup> “Sueciae Regibus ac Regnis cedantur Provinciae Halland, Scania, Blekingia, Bomholmia.” Halland had, however, been in Swedish possession since the treaty of Bromsebro, 1644. — Meadowe, pp. 3-4; Jones, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Meadowe, p. 60.



#### IV. *The Regulation of Colonial Commerce.*

The general effect of the Civil War on the English colonies in America was to lessen their dependence on the mother country. This was true of Puritan New England, of Royalist Barbadoes and of Virginia, with its mixed population. After the execution of Charles I, Barbadoes rose in open insurrection,<sup>1</sup> while Virginia passed an act declaring the execution and trial to be treason and proclaiming Charles II as legitimate king.<sup>2</sup> The course of events in some of the lesser West-Indian islands was similar. Parliament's answer to this insurrectionary spirit was the act of October, 1650.<sup>3</sup> This act contains two important provisions, differing greatly in scope and character. By the first of these provisions, all who had been guilty of the acts of rebellion mentioned above in Virginia, Barbadoes, Antigua and Bermuda were declared traitors and were forbidden to have any commercial relations with any other people whatsoever. This provision in the act of 1650 was purely punitive and political in character. By the second provision of this act, ships of any foreign nation were forbidden "to come to, or Trade in, or Traffique" with any of the English colonies in America, unless a special license to do so had been first obtained from Parliament or the Council of State. It is stated in the act that this second provision was to prevent enemies of the new government in England from being brought to the English colonies, as had happened, for instance, in Barbadoes. On its face, therefore, it would seem that this provision was also political in character. As a matter of fact, it was a commercial act, securing, on the pretense of political safety, a monopoly of the trade with all the American colonies to English ships. The importance of this provision has been overlooked by a number of historians, who have regarded the act as purely punitive<sup>4</sup> and temporary<sup>5</sup> in

<sup>1</sup> Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1584-1660, pp. 342, 343, 350, 390.

<sup>2</sup> Hening, I, 359-361.

<sup>3</sup> Scobell, II, 132-134.

<sup>4</sup> Bruce, Economic History of Virginia, I, 349.

<sup>5</sup> Ugo Rabbeno, The American Commercial Policy, p. 13.

character. Even Mr. Firth is guilty of this oversight. Ignoring the act of 1650 entirely, he says that the Navigation Act of 1651 "was the first attempt on the part of England to legislate for the colonies as a whole, and to treat them as integral parts of one political system."<sup>1</sup> What Mr. Firth says of the act of 1651 is true of the act of 1650. The Navigation Act proper of 1651 merely provided that, under certain conditions, goods might be imported only in English or colonial vessels. Goods could be exported in foreign vessels, if they had come there in ballast, and under certain conditions foreign vessels could trade with the colonies. On the other hand, the act of 1650 was much broader in scope. It absolutely prohibited foreign vessels from trading with the colonies; hence nothing could be either imported or exported in such vessels. It is true that it was stated in the act that the Council of State or Parliament might give licenses to trade contrary to its provisions. But from the evidence available we know that very few licenses<sup>2</sup> were granted; and, besides, the system in itself was too cumbersome to mitigate the act in practice. What England wanted by this act was a monopoly of trade with her colonies. This will be apparent from what follows.

In order to reduce the rebellious colonies to subjection, a fleet had been sent out under Sir George Ayscue. At Barbadoes it was found that trade with the Dutch was very freely practiced, and a number of Dutch vessels there were seized, in accordance with the act of 1650.<sup>3</sup> Barbadoes surrendered to this expedition, and in the articles of surrender it was provided that the island was "to have as great freedom of trade as ever."<sup>4</sup> The smaller West-Indian islands quickly followed the example in surrendering.<sup>5</sup> Virginia had protested vigorously against the act of 1650, claiming that it was due to the

<sup>1</sup> Firth, *Cromwell*, pp. 392-393.

<sup>2</sup> For a license to trade contrary to this act, see *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series*, 1584-1660, p. 356.

<sup>3</sup> Whitelocke, *Memorials*, p. 498.

<sup>4</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series*, 1675-1676, Addenda, 1574-1674, pp. 85-86.

<sup>5</sup> Gardiner, *Commonwealth and Protectorate*, II, 77-78.

"avarice of a few interested persons, who endeavour to rob us of all we sweat and labour for."<sup>1</sup> This colony, however, likewise soon submitted to Parliament; and in the articles of surrender it was provided, as in the case of Barbadoes, that "the people of Virginia have free trade as the people of England do enjoy to all places and with all nations."<sup>2</sup> This provision in the articles of surrender freed the colonists from the first provision of the act of 1650. It allowed them to trade with all nations. It did not, however, as was contended by Virginia,<sup>3</sup> allow foreign ships to trade with them. This contention about the articles of surrender was also raised subsequently by the Dutch ambassador in England. The expedition that sailed to attack the Spanish power in the West Indies had stopped on its way at Barbadoes and had seized a number of Dutch vessels found trading there.<sup>4</sup> Nieupoort protested, claiming that the act of 1650 was only a punitive measure and that the articles of surrender did not do away with this act. He was answered that by an act of Parliament such commerce was forbidden.<sup>5</sup>

England's monopoly of trade with her colonies received also the sanction of international recognition. When Whitelocke was ambassador in Sweden this subject was discussed very frequently and, at that time, Sweden tried to have the act of 1650 modified.<sup>6</sup> In the treaty of 1654 between Sweden and England nothing is mentioned about this monopoly; but in the treaty of 1656 it is specifically stated that, despite the fact that commerce with the English colonies in America is prohibited to foreigners, Cromwell would grant licenses to those Swedes who should ask him privately, provided they had letters of recommendation from the King of Sweden.<sup>7</sup> This English monopoly is likewise specifically recognized in the treaty of peace between England and Denmark in 1654.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Virginia Historical Magazine*, I, 81.

<sup>2</sup> Henning, I, 364. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 559-601.

<sup>4</sup> Thurloe, III, 158, 254; Venables, *Narrative* (ed. Firth), p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Thurloe, III, 749. See also Nieupoort's other letters about this, *Ibid.*, IV, 17, 214, 258-259.

<sup>6</sup> Whitelocke, *Journal*, II, 21, 30, 50, 102.

<sup>7</sup> Dumont, vol. vi, part ii, pp. 125-127.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92, art. iii.



We have other evidence that Cromwell considered that the act of 1650, in so far as it prohibited foreign vessels from trading with the colonies, had not been affected by the articles of surrender of Virginia and Barbadoes. The commander of the squadron in American waters in 1655 was specifically instructed to seize all ships trading contrary to the act of 1650.<sup>1</sup> Another naval officer had received similar instructions.<sup>2</sup> In Barbadoes some Dutch vessels had been seized trading, as a contemporary writes, in opposition to the statutes of October 3, 1650, and October 9, 1651.<sup>3</sup>

It is difficult to say to what extent this act of 1650 was enforced.<sup>4</sup> The age was, in comparison to ours, a lawless one, especially on the sea. The colonies, chiefly Barbadoes and Virginia, found it to their advantage to ship in Dutch vessels on account of the cheaper freight rates. The act was a severe burden on them, and they had a strong inducement to violate it. Virginia, in her protest against the stoppage of Dutch trade, admitted that there was some violation of the act.<sup>5</sup> In Barbadoes a jury found for the foreigners, in the case of the seizure of some vessels trading contrary to the acts of 1650 and 1651.<sup>6</sup> In this colony there was "an especial fondness" for trade with the Dutch.<sup>7</sup> According to Hutchinson, the acts were not enforced in Massachusetts.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, we hear of the seizure of a great number of vessels that had violated the act.<sup>9</sup> The general impression given by the evidence is that the act was enforced to the extent that the imperfect control of England over her colonies allowed, and that English men-of-war invariably enforced the law when they saw it violated.

<sup>1</sup> Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1675-1676, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Thurloe, III, 754. See also letter of Modyford, mentioning the seizure of two Dutch vessels trading contrary to this act. — Thurloe, III, 565.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 249.

<sup>4</sup> Beer, Commercial Policy of England, pp. 32-34.

<sup>5</sup> Thurloe, V, 80.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 249.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, III, 142, 249.

<sup>8</sup> Hutchinson, History of Massachusetts, I, 174.

<sup>9</sup> Hening, I, 382; Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1584-1660, pp. 364, 467; Thurloe, III, 158, 565, 754; Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1675-1676, pp. 94-95.

The act of 1650 was the first piece of legislation affecting the colonies as a whole. It forms the bridge linking the haphazard individual policy of James I and Charles I with the well-rounded and complete colonial system developed under the later Stuarts. It was the only important colonial regulation that dates from these years. In minor ways, however, colonial commerce was encouraged. The Stuart prohibition<sup>1</sup> of growing tobacco in England, in order to give colonial tobacco a monopoly of the market, was continued.<sup>2</sup> For the encouragement of colonial sugar and ginger these articles were given a preferential duty over foreign products.<sup>3</sup> Then the export tax on geldings sent to the colonies was reduced.<sup>4</sup> In order to develop Jamaica, the export duty was at one time remitted on a quantity of articles.<sup>5</sup> A beginning was also made of the policy of developing naval stores in the colonies,<sup>6</sup> which, at a subsequent date, became very comprehensive in application.<sup>7</sup> In the internal affairs of the colonies Cromwell practically did not interfere at all.<sup>8</sup>

The influence of Cromwell on the destinies of the East India Company was, as its latest historian has ably shown, of great importance. Under Cromwell, Hunter says, "the corporation passed, with little recognition of the change at the time, from its mediæval to its modern basis."<sup>9</sup> "Cromwell viewed the India trade from a national standpoint," he adds, "and regarded the Company as one of the several alternative methods

<sup>1</sup> Beer, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> Scobell, II (April 1, 1652), 187, 238; Whitelocke, Memorials, p. 570. See also petition of planters of English tobacco, in Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1656-1657, p. 5. <sup>3</sup> Scobell, II, 387. <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 375.

<sup>5</sup> Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1656-1657, p. 6.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Colonial Series, 1675-1676, p. 87.

<sup>7</sup> Lord, Industrial Experiments in the British Colonies; Beer, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-103.

<sup>8</sup> See Cromwell's letters on the boundary disputes between Virginia and Maryland, Carlyle, *op. cit.*, letters 196 and 203. Prowse, the historian of Newfoundland, says: "Even in our Island, the sagacious statesmanship and firm strong hand of Cromwell made itself felt." History of Newfoundland, p. 159. Cf. also pp. 160-164. Lord Willoughby's small colony in Surinam was, as Mr. Lucas says, "left very much to itself" (Historical Geography, II, 272).

<sup>9</sup> Hunter, India, II, 102, 103.

for conducting it . . . ; throughout he had the interest not of the Company, but of the nation in mind.”<sup>1</sup> Yet this decisive influence of Cromwell on the history of the East India Company has, as Hunter points out, been in general ignored by historians.<sup>2</sup>

We have already seen that one of the causes of the Dutch war was the conflict of the two rival nations in the East, and also that the peace of 1654 gave the English Company some reparation for the injuries it had suffered at the hands of the Dutch. The efforts of the English Company after 1654 were primarily devoted to strengthening its position at home, by securing a new charter and by obtaining an absolute monopoly of English trade with the East Indies. There was a strong feeling in England that the trade to India should be open and free to all merchants. Even the merchants within the company clamored for the privilege of trading as individuals.<sup>3</sup> This matter was discussed at length by the government, as a matter of great national importance.<sup>4</sup> Cromwell took a long time to decide the question, and at one time he seemed to incline to the view of those demanding a less rigid monopoly. He allowed a number of merchants to trade privately to India<sup>5</sup>; and, in consequence thereof, it was expected both at home and in the United Provinces that the East India Company would be dissolved and that the Indian trade would be thrown open to the whole nation.<sup>6</sup> These licenses were, however, only tentative, and the final conclusion reached by Cromwell and the Council of State was in favor of the company. It was decided that the trade of India should not be thrown open to the whole nation and also that the members of the company could not trade as individuals. The East India Company, reorganized on a joint-stock basis, was to have the exclusive monopoly of the trade.

<sup>1</sup> Hunter, *India*, II, 107.

<sup>2</sup> From Hunter's sweeping criticism, the admirable sketch of Sir Alfred Lyall should be excepted. Cf. *The Rise of the British Dominion in India*, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Bruce, *Annals*, I, 492.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 502.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 508; Hunter, II, 121.

<sup>6</sup> Bruce, I, 509; Thurloe, III, 80.



The East India Company had been originally organized on the basis of subscriptions for a single joint voyage, the profits of which were to be divided among the subscribers. This system, whose weaknesses are patent, was soon changed to the system of subscriptions to a series of joint voyages for a number of years. Thus, there was no continuity in the life of the company; it was merely an association, or what modern finance would call a syndicate, having in hand commercial operations extending over a limited number of years. The inevitable breakdown of this system led to the demand for a less rigid monopoly of the East India trade mentioned above.

In 1656 the company petitioned for a renewal of its charter, with additional privileges. This petition Cromwell personally referred to the Council of State.<sup>1</sup> The committee to whom this matter was handed over reported in favor of a united joint stock, which report was adopted by the Council and by Cromwell.<sup>2</sup> A new charter<sup>3</sup> was granted in 1657, under which the East India Company became a corporation whose existence was continuous. The capital was subscribed, not for one voyage or for a series of voyages, but practically in perpetuity; and the company, under this charter, assumed its modern character. Of Cromwell's connection with this, Hunter says:

He found the English in the East struggling, humiliated, in despair. He left them with their future assured. He was the first ruler of England who realized that the India trade was no private preserve of the sovereign and his nominees, but a concern of the nation, to be maintained by national diplomacy and defended by the national arms.<sup>4</sup>

## V. *Summary and Criticism.*

Under Cromwell there was a sudden expansion of English maritime power and a vast extension of its usefulness to the nation. From this period date the permanent Mediterranean and West-Indian squadrons and the naval station in North

<sup>1</sup> Bruce, I, 504.

<sup>2</sup> Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1656-1657, p. 272; Bruce, I, 516.

<sup>3</sup> Bruce, I, 529; Macpherson, European Commerce with India, p. 124.

<sup>4</sup> Hunter, II, 141.

America.<sup>1</sup> The conscious development of the English naval power was primarily due to political causes—to the transference of the scene of the Civil War from the land to the sea. But this enormous increase in sea power was in itself of great benefit to English commerce. Sea power was, at that time, an essential prerequisite to successful international trade; for armed commerce was not the exception, but the rule. We have already seen how this navy was used against the United Provinces, France, Spain and Portugal to secure England's economic development. It was also used to great effect against that scourge of seventeenth-century commerce, the pirates from Dunkirk and Ostend<sup>2</sup> and from the Mohammedan states on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. These corsairs had been left practically unmolested by the other powers,<sup>3</sup> and it remained for Cromwell to take energetic measures to protect English commerce from them. They carried on their operations on a large scale, and at one time even "held command of the channel."<sup>4</sup> Cromwell put a stop to this outrageous state of affairs and freed English commerce for the time being from this incubus.<sup>5</sup>

Cromwell was essentially the child of his times—the product of a curious blending of commercial shrewdness and religious zeal. Mr. Gardiner has aptly called him the most typical Englishman; yet he is, perhaps in a truer sense, the most typical Yankee. Despite the religious symbolism and phraseology which burden his speeches, his mind was a very practical one. His son was not to be brought up on theology. "I would have him mind and understand Business, read a little History, study the Mathematics and Cosmography," writes Cromwell.<sup>6</sup> In matters of trade he took a keen and lively interest.<sup>7</sup> In addition to the various enterprises described above, Cromwell had

<sup>1</sup> M. Oppenheim, "The Navy of the Commonwealth," *English Historical Review*, XI, 20.    <sup>2</sup> Thurloe, I, 117.    <sup>3</sup> Montagu Burrows, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> M. Oppenheim, "Royal Navy under Charles I," *English Historical Review*, IX, 113-114.

<sup>5</sup> Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1656-1657, pp. 49, 129; Carlyle, pp. 68-69; Firth, Cromwell, pp. 377-378; Gardiner, Commonwealth and Protectorate, III, 376-386.    <sup>6</sup> Carlyle, I, 397.    <sup>7</sup> Whitelocke, Memorials, pp. 617-618.

in mind at one time the capture of Gibraltar. "If possessed and made tenable by us," he asks, "would it not be both an advantage to our trade and an annoyance to the Spaniards?"<sup>1</sup> Then Cromwell's advocacy of the legal return of the Jews to England was based primarily on commercial grounds.<sup>2</sup>

The initial difficulty that confronts us in criticising Cromwell's policy is the shortness of the period during which he had complete control of affairs—five years. His death left his plans uncompleted and the Restoration meant, in many respects, a change in policy. Yet Cromwell's policy was not so ephemeral as Seeley considers it. The only important reversal of his policy was the retrocession of Dunkirk to France by Charles II. Cromwell's scheme of making England a continental power came to nothing. Yet it cannot be said that his plan was erroneous in conception. It is true, it was not taken up by subsequent statesmen; but this proves nothing, as the accession of William III to the throne of England did away with the necessity thereof. The Revolution of 1688 marks the sacrifice of the United Provinces, as a naval and expanding colonial power, to England. In the long war carried on against France by England and the United Provinces under William III, England did everything to foster the development of her colonial and sea power; while the Dutch bore the brunt of the land war and their navy was allowed to decline. When finally peace was declared, the United Provinces received merely a rectification of their frontier; while England not only gained commercial privileges from France and Spain, but also added to her empire many valuable possessions, amongst which were Gibraltar and Nova Scotia.<sup>3</sup>

A marked characteristic of Cromwell is his intense patriotism and pride of race. In his speech before Parliament in 1657, he said:

Truly, I shall in a word or two congratulate you with good you are in possession of, and in some respect I also with you. God hath

<sup>1</sup> Carlyle, III, 100; *cf.* also p. 113. See also Montague's answer to this proposition, Thurloe, V, 67-70.

<sup>2</sup> Lucien Wolf, *Menasseh Ben Israel's Mission to Oliver Cromwell*.

<sup>3</sup> *Cf.* Mahan, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62.



bestowed upon you, and you are in possession of it, — Three Nations, and all that appertains to them. . . . This is furnished — give me leave to say, for I believe it is true, — with the best People in the world, possessing so much soil. . . . And in this People, in the midst of this People, “you have what is still more precious” a People . . . that are to God “as the apple of His Eye.” . . . A People of the blessing of God; a People under His safety and protection.<sup>1</sup>

His overweening pride of race induced the belief that naught but success could befall any efforts of England. This explains his utter disregard of the sensibilities and rights of other states. Cromwell made England the most powerful state of his time, but also the state that was most disliked. “His friendship,” as Clarendon says, “was current at the value he put upon it” and “it was hard to discover which feared him most, France, Spain or the Low Countries.”<sup>2</sup> This chauvinism made him also prone to underestimate the amount of opposition he was bound to encounter and led to that recklessness which is characteristic of his policy. The West-Indian scheme was conceived on broad lines, but the expedition was handicapped at the outset by hopelessly inadequate equipment. Cromwell’s plans were very far reaching, yet it is questionable if they were not too far reaching, as it is probable that they would have bankrupted England. As Mr. Gardiner says, “he was attempting the hopeless task of supporting a policy of the eighteenth century on the finances of the seventeenth.”<sup>3</sup>

A fundamental characteristic of English colonization is the fact that it has been due, in the main, to private initiative.<sup>4</sup> The development of the English empire has been a healthy, natural growth, each acquisition of new territory having become inevitable through economic conditions. The preëxistence of valuable interests has forced the government, usually against

<sup>1</sup> Carlyle, III, 164-167.

<sup>2</sup> Clarendon, *History* (ed. W. D. Macray), VI, 94.

<sup>3</sup> Gardiner, *English Historical Review*, XI, 160; *Cromwell's Place in History*, p. 101.

<sup>4</sup> Bonnasieux, *Les Grandes Compagnies de Commerce*, p. 167, contrasts this development with the diametrically opposed French conditions.

its will, to add to its colonies. Napoleon could not understand why the English had derived so little benefit from their long and finally victorious contest with him. He said that "probably for a thousand years such another opportunity of aggrandizing England will not occur. In the position of affairs nothing could have been refused to you." And he added: "It was ridiculous to leave Batavia to the Dutch, and Bourbon and Pondicherry to the French." "Your ministers, too," he said, "should have stipulated for a commercial monopoly in the seas of India and China. You ought not to have allowed the French or any other nation to put their nose beyond the Cape."<sup>1</sup> In a word, the policy of the government has always lagged behind the needs of the mercantile classes. The English government has almost uniformly represented the conservative spirit in expansion.

✓ ✓  
The chief exception to this normal development of the British empire is found in the Cromwellian epoch. At that time the colonial policy was far in advance of the desires of the English people and of the needs of commerce. The attack on the Spanish power in America found extreme disfavor in English commercial centres. Cromwell's plans were in advance of his times and were prophetic of future developments. His policy was un-English, so far as he did not allow the commercial to precede the colonial development, but tried to reverse the order.

Cromwell's influence on the expansion of the English state has been recognized, to a certain extent, by various writers. Carlyle, in eloquent words, attributes England's "West-Indian Interest" to Cromwell's spirit of determination.<sup>2</sup> Goldwin Smith calls him the "father of our naval greatness."<sup>3</sup> Seeley, while denying to Cromwell the merit of deliberate policy, says his fabric "revealed for the first time the large possibilities of our state. It is a first sketch of the British Empire."<sup>4</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Rosebery, Napoleon, pp. 195-196. On the attitude of the English government at this time, see H. E. Egerton, Sir Stamford Raffles.

<sup>2</sup> Carlyle, III, 85.

<sup>3</sup> Three English Statesmen, p. 99.

<sup>4</sup> British Policy, II, 63.

most recent and the most brilliant of Cromwell's biographers, John Morley, has no sympathy with the view that depicts Cromwell "as the conscious author of a great system of colonial expansion." He concedes that such ideas were then alive, but maintains that "Cromwell's colonial policy was that of his predecessors, as it was that of the statesmen who followed him."<sup>1</sup> This view seems wholly untenable. It is not claimed that the ideas that he embodied originated with him, and that the British empire is the work of one man. The growth of this great empire has been the outcome of social forces, and in this it differs from no other historical phenomenon. The rôle of the great man in history is to recognize the tendency of events and to use the power intrusted to him in quickening the development towards the inevitable goal, though it be but dimly perceived. It is only in this sense that the name of any man can be connected with a great historic movement. Cromwell is worthy of a position in that small group of illustrious men who are in this manner identified with the growth of the British empire. His time was not wasted, as most writers suppose, in fighting a windmill such as the imaginary Anti-Protestant Alliance of all Catholic Europe. A great part of his time and energy was devoted to furthering the expansion of England's commercial and colonial empire.

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<sup>1</sup> John Morley, *Cromwell*, pp. 447-448.













